El. Rose
Shiloh 1811

ROSELLA.

A NOVEL.

BRITISH MUSEUM
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ROSELLA,

OR

MODERN OCCURRENCES.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY

MARY CHARLTON,

AUTHOR OF PHEDORA, &c.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
PRINTED AT THE
Minerva-Press,
FOR WILLIAM LANE, LEADENHALL-STREET.
1799.

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636 cm
135

ROSELLA.

CHAP. I.

A Hiſtory, and a Rencontre.

FROM this time a ſort of *guerre maſquée* ſubſiſted between Oberne and Roſella, who was ſometimes nearly offended by his flying ſarcaſms: neither did they in the leaſt delight her friend, who was wonderfully ſurpriſed that he had not by this epoch fallen into penſive muſings, and betrayed himſelf by caſting lingering looks of adoration and deſpair upon his young and lovely companion, a failure ſhe could not by any means account for.

To any ſentiment of particular partiality for Oberne, of which Roſella had ſuſpected her, Miſs Beauclerc had not the ſmalleſt bias; and indeed ſo entirely was her imagination occupied by the charming eclat which ſhe hoped her beloved child would make in the annals of romance, that ſhe never gave a paſſing thought to the poſſibility of renewing her own adventures, by exciting ardent admiration (like a certain lady of devout memory, who lived like a good houſewife in a ſmall houſe by the ſide of the bourn), merely by the enchantment of matronly ſmiles and flowing grey locks.

Every one of the party was ſo completely tired of their forced reſidence at Lanerk, that on the day following their excurſion to the falls, Miſs Beauclerc, not finding herſelf incommoded by the effort, removed to Hamilton, and the day after returned to Glaſgow, where ſhe found a packet from her faithful Selina; and Roſella was told that ſhe had delicately hinted her ſorrow that the

the correſpondence between Lydia and her had ſo much languiſhed; but that Miſs Ellinger was writing a letter to her beloved young friend, and ſhe hoped their epiſtolary intercourſe would now be more frequent.

Roſella, chagrined to be importuned upon a ſubject ſo inimical to her ideas, as intimacy and friendſhip with Miſs Lydia, promiſed, nevertheleſs, that ſhe would not neglect the wiſhes of Mrs. Ellinger, and her friend was pleaſed with her compliance.

Mr. Oberne ſtill accompanying them, they ſet out for Loch Lomond; but as his influence increaſed with the extent of their journey, he contrived, in their way to Dumbarton, to change ſituations with Nancy, by placing her in the chaiſe he hired for himſelf. They travelled very ſlowly, as Miſs Beauclerc made herſelf believe that ſhe was not yet able to endure the leaſt fatigue, and were near three hours in the road from

Glaſgow to Dumbarton; but the ſcenery was ſo delightful, that neither of her fellow-travellers complained of their protracted progreſs.

Oberne, who had in his haſty arrangement with Miſs Beauclerc, merely propoſed to accompany her to Glaſgow, and afterwards extended the plan to the lake, now became very inquiſitive as to the route ſhe intended to purſue, after having ſatisfied her inclination to behold the beauties of Lomond; and in reply, ſhe only told him ſhe meant to travel north-eaſt.

"To Perth?" aſked Oberne.

"I believe I may paſs through Perth in the courſe of my journey," returned Miſs Beauclerc, with an air of reſerve unuſual to her; "but at preſent I am not quite determined."

"May I aſk if you return ſoon to England?" reſumed he.

"Moſt

"Moſt probably in the autumn; but," ſhe added, regarding Roſella expreſſively, "circumſtances which I cannot foreſee, muſt alone decide."

Oberne obſerved the glance caſt towards her unconſcious companion, and ruminated with a mien of gravity and chagrin. "Perhaps," ſaid he, after a pauſe of a few moments, "Miſs Montreſor and yourſelf expect an addition to your party when you quit Loch Lomond?"—She told him they did not.—"Then will you allow me to hope that you will not diſcard me yet?" reſumed he.

Roſella, whoſe head was bent with an air of extreme intereſt towards the charming banks of the Clyde on the Renfrew ſide, liſtened very attentively for the reply to this modeſt propoſal, and heard Miſs Beauclerc ſay that ſhe had no objection to viſit Perth immediately after they quitted the neighbourhood of Loch Lomond; and he might

from thence, if he choſe, return to Edinburgh, whilſt Roſella and herſelf purſued their tour.

This intimation was received with much gratitude by Oberne, who entered the town of Dumbarton in high ſpirits, and perſuaded Miſs Beauclerc not to proceed any further that day. At dinner Roſella found it impoſſible to preſerve her gravity five minutes together, from the effect of his united vivacity and good humour; and when the meal was over, the Scotch landlord, underſtanding from Nancy that the party were to proceed the next morning on their route, entered the room to enquire "af the leddies wad na gang tul the Caſtle to ken what a brae place it was."

Oberne ſeconded the motion, and aſked if Miſs Beauclerc would permit him to eſcort her thither; but to her the undertaking appeared ſo ſerious, that ſhe declined it, in ſpite of the earneſt yet reſpectful entreaties of

of the landlord, who was in deſpair that any one ſhould paſs through Dumbarton, and not behold its bonny Caſtle; but ſhe adviſed her young companion to accept the offered protection of their fellow-traveller, and walk to it.

Roſella was extremely unwilling to go out under the ſole protection of Oberne; but, fatigued with everlaſtingly oppoſing her ſingle and unſupported opinion againſt that of her friend, and afraid of incurring his philippics if ſhe ſeemed to heſitate, ſhe aſſented, though without that cheerfulneſs that uſually marked her compliance, even when ſhe wiſhed to compliment the judgment of others at the expence of her own.

Oberne appeared gratified in being entruſted with the care of her, though while the ſubject was in diſcuſſion, he had not urged it; whilſt Miſs Beauclerc, as Roſella quitted her, breathed a ſecret vow that ſhe

might not return without ſome charming adventure.

As they walked towards the Caſtle, Oberne, ſtill in high ſpirits, amuſed her with a few hiſtorical anecdotes which his reading and his memory happened to furniſh him with; but though ſhe felt obliged to him for his communications, they did not enliven her. Having paſſed the houſe of the Governor, they aſcended with ſome little effort by the ſteps cut in the rock, and were let through ſome immenſe iron gates, which cloſing behind them with a heavy jail-like noiſe, rather ſtartled Roſella, who found herſelf ſhut out, as it ſeemed, from the world below, and perched upon a ſtupendous cliff, adorned only at intervals by the habitations of the ſoldiers belonging to the fort.

"Now you are completely caged," ſaid Oberne, who obſerved her emotion, and gueſſed at what paſſed in her mind. "Tell me,

me, my little prudent Roſella, what has availed all your reſerve to me, and your anger againſt your good-humoured friend, becauſe when I ſought refuge in her ſociety againſt the naked terrors of the wide world, ſhe did not drive me from the gentle umbrage to which I had crept, by a tempeſt of ſcorn and indignation! Pray obſerve that with all your circumſpection, you have ſuffered me to entrap you within theſe formidable gates, which, for aught you know, may not readily open again to your bidding. However, when we arrive at the ſummit of the cliff, you will ſee that your priſon is airy, and, unlike moſt others, it will not ſhut out your proſpects."

At any other moment Roſella would have laughed at this rhodomantade, becauſe ſhe knew that Oberne often indulged himſelf in a metaphorical ſtyle of converſation; but the impreſſion made upon her mind by the peculiarity of the ſpot ſhe had attained, aided by the accidental gloom of the weather, which had

ſuddenly ſhut from them the wide-ſpreading proſpect on every ſide, occaſioned her fears to combat her good ſenſe, and ſhe gazed at the countenance of Oberne in doubt and irreſolution.

He laughed at her credulity, and continued to teaze her by commenting upon the diſtreſs other damſels had endured from the tyranny of jealous lovers; and bade her be thankful that her good fortune had caſt her into the power of ſuch a courteous knight as himſelf.

At length Roſella recovered her compoſure, from perceiving that he merely amuſed himſelf with her perplexity, and even endeavored to appear cheerful, to atone for having ſuffered herſelf to liſten to idle and romantic apprehenſions.

When they had reached the ſummit of the cliff, Oberne, pointing to the north, exclaimed, "There is Loch Lomond, towards which

which we are travelling—Loch Lomond, which was to have been the extent of my journeying in your ſociety, had not Miſs Beauclerc taken pity on my forlorn ſtate. I am more than doubly obliged to her; for when I had firſt the good fortune to ſee you, I was on the point of being very diſſipated and imprudent, I believe."

"Pray will you inform me truly," ſaid Roſella with a ſmile, "what reaſon decided you ſo ſuddenly in our favor, as to procure us the honor of your company from Edinburgh?"

"Faith, ſince you are frank enough to enquire in this honeſt manner," replied he, "I will tell you without varniſh or equivocation. I made the party in a frolic; for I was at that moment *paſſablement* idle and *ennuyé*, and did not care to which point I was ſteered, provided I were amuſed for a few hours. But I found in the ſociety of Miſs Beauclerc a charm I could not eaſily give up; and I determined not to forego my ſituation whilſt I could by any means retain it.

However," added he, "I had another motive—it aroſe from your exceſſive ſage and repulſive aſpect: when you heard that your friend had given me permiſſion to follow her to Glaſgow, you drew thoſe charming features into ſuch a look of dignified wiſdom, and collected ſuch a chilling atmoſphere round you, that I thought you ſeemed reſolved to freeze me off the field; the certain conſequence of which was, that I equally reſolved to keep my ground. When, inſtead of entrenching yourſelf as you did, if you had only attacked me openly, and ſaid, as with great truth you might, 'Oberne, you are a d—m—d impudent fellow to fancy that, without introduction or recommendation, you are to treſpaſs upon our good humour, and travel with us *en famille*, when, for aught we know, you may be a pick-pocket, or a bog-trotter! Go, preſumptuous dog! and find ſureties who will be reſponſible for your unſullied lineage, and unqueſtionable good demeanor;'—I muſt, as you may well ſuppoſe, have felt defeated at ſuch an

an addreſs; and as I could not, moſt probably, have picked out any lady or gentleman voucher in Edinburgh, in the circle of my acquaintance, who happened to be known to you and Miſs Beauclerc, I ſhould at this moment have been idling there or elſewhere, provoked at my unlucky deſtiny, and envying you the undiſturbed ſweets of your peregrination."

"I never ſwear," returned Roſella, laughing; "ſo if you will efface the oath and the opprobrious epithets from the oration you ſay I ought to have made, you may, if you pleaſe, apply it at this moment, and in reply perhaps you will condeſcend to give ſome account of yourſelf."

"I like this plain dealing," ſaid he; "and as we walk down the cliff, I will give you my birth, parentage, and education: I know that a dying ſpeech and confeſſion ſhould properly follow, but for that you muſt wait till we arrive at Perth. Be it known to you then, moſt lovely Roſella," continued he in a burleſque tone, "that I was born near Killbegan,

Killbegan, in the ſiſter kingdom, of honeſt parents, I believe,—but of their induſtry I never heard any vaunt; on the contrary, it is reported that my honored papa, Dennis Neil Oberne, commonly called Lord Clanallan, loſt an eſtate becauſe he was too indolent to ſearch for title-deeds,—loſt an election, becauſe he was too idle to travel fifty miles to attend it,—and loſt his life, becauſe he had unluckily no employment either of mind or body to combat his chagrin for theſe misfortunes. Hugh Oberne, my brother, had the good fortune to ſcramble on to the ſcene before me; ſo that he is, of courſe, a gentleman of much more importance than myſelf: and I have heard that I ſhall never regain the ſmall portion I originally enjoyed of his gracious favor, becauſe it happened that I was at the point of death during the election I ſpeak of, at which he ought to have been the ſucceſsful candidate;—and though I was in London, and my father in Dublin, Hugh inſiſts that his fooliſh concern for my inſignificant life occaſioned his

his ſtrange negligence of the advancement of his heir, notwithſtanding the expreſs that contained the news of my danger, had not then reached him. From that moment I became, in the eyes of my good brother, a moſt graceleſs and unpleaſant object: it was ſoon diſcovered that he was never entirely happy when I occupied a younger brother's apartment at Caſtle Oberne, or even when I took up my lodging in the third ſtory of the London-houſe; ſo I was ſent to College to make more room for poor Hugh, and from thence I was diſpatched to make a tour on the Continent, with an allowance ſo moderate, that in a year I overſtepped my credit conſiderably. I drew on Lord Clanallan for the deficient ſum, and followed my draft to England, to aſſiſt him in the trouble of honoring it; but behold, I found my friend Hugh poſſeſſed of the title, and he ſent my demand and myſelf to the devil. Fortunately, however, I ſtill retained a large ſhare of my mother's affection, who could never diſcover any thing very criminal in the unhappy

unhappy blunder of not being a year older than Hugh, inſtead of the contrary; and ſhe, good ſoul, aſſiſted me in the dilemma to which I was reduced: for, independent of her jointure, to which I was entitled, I was totally deſtitute of inheritance, as my portion of the periſhable gifts of Fortune had been bequeathed me by my deceaſed father in a legacy upon the loſt eſtate, and he had never been able to gather ſufficient reſolution to alter his original will. When Lady Clanallan had taken up my draft, and preſented me with all the caſh ſhe could ſpare, I was not ſo ready as Hugh expected to retire into obſcurity, but remained ſome time in London after ſhe had departed for her reſidence in Ireland. He would have condeſcended to purchaſe me a pair of colors in a marching regiment, but I preferred the Guards, and he was well aware of the impracticability of entering them, without having the undeſired ſatisfaction of maintaining me afterwards. And anxious for my welfare, he kindly employed himſelf in looking round

round for ſome rich bride, whoſe Engliſh guineas would improve my Iriſh deſtiny: and having ſucceeded, he demanded my thanks for his fraternal attention, and my immediate acquieſcence in his ſcheme. But the good lady he had ſelected, was of a mind and perſon ſo unhappily deformed, that I rebelled againſt his ordinations; but at length, dunned on every ſide, and threatened with a jail, I confeſs to you that I conſented to accompany him upon an expedition to obtain from my captivating dulcina, an implicit avowal of the partiality he pretended to have long diſcovered. And here my good genius prevailed:—before ſuch a deſirable explanation took place, a ſiſter of my mother died, and conſiderately bequeathed me a few thouſands;—ſo I made a low bow to my obliging brother, and a ſtill more profound one to my intended lady, and plunged violently into every folly and extravagance which offered to a fooliſh fellow juſt eſcaped from the moſt unpalatable of evils, poverty and dependance. Without much

experience,

experience, my charming Roſella may ſuppoſe that my riches diminiſhed very rapidly; and I was tormented again by my brother's renewed propoſals, when Fortune once more ſuccoured me, and I became maſter of a very pretty eſtate, exactly on the confines of his domains; and Hugh immediately obtained from me a promiſe that I would mortgage and ſell only to him. I have religiouſly adhered to my obligation; but I have been ſo provident, that this ſecond ſupply is not half gone yet, though I have poſſeſſed it almoſt three years."

The manner in which this was uttered drew a ſmile from Roſella, who congratulated him upon his remaining three years' proſpect; and promiſed, at his requeſt, not to forget him in his ſecond eclipſe.

They had now almoſt reached the Governor's houſe in their deſcent, and the frank hiſtory Oberne had juſt given, had ſo much increaſed the confidence of Roſella, that ſhe

ſhe had accepted his arm, and was chatting with ſome gaiety, when they were met by three or four gentlemen who were aſcending.

"Ha! Oberne," cried one of the party, "have you only reached Dumbarton yet? Why, my good fellow, by the haſte with which you fled from Edinburgh, you ought by this time to have been Philandering on the other ſide of the Atlantic. Come, introduce us to this charming girl, and allow her to waſte a ſmile or two upon your friends."

"A ſmile or two!" vociferated another; "Oberne knows better;—a ſmile from thoſe lips is worth all the treaſures of the Clyde."

Oberne, who looked equally provoked and chagrined, attempted to reply; but his *ci-devant* boon companions continued the attack with ſuch a horrible noiſe and hallooing, that it was impoſſible he could be heard.

in your Rosella,

Roſella, mortified, ſhocked, and frightened, turned pale, and drawing her arm from his, made a ſudden effort to retreat; but was prevented by the officious intervention of a perſon who, repeating her name, congratulated himſelf upon the pleaſure of ſuch an unexpected meeting. Roſella, turning at this addreſs, beheld the grinning countenance of Mr. Povey, who, taking her hand with an impertinent freedom, told her he hoped ſhe would allow him the title of an old acquaintance, and recommend him as ſuch to her friend Mr. Oberne. But had ſhe meant to have complied with this inſolent requeſt, Oberne was far from being diſpoſed to admit the plea; for it was ſcarcely uttered, before he aimed a blow at the unlucky Povey, which rolled him down the path to a conſiderable diſtance, to the infinite amuſement of his companions, whoſe petulant ebullitions were, however, rather reſtrained by the atchievement.

The

The countenance of Oberne ſtill glowed with rage, whilſt he deſired the gentlemen to wait half an hour at the Governor's houſe. "My firſt care," added he, "muſt be to attend this young lady, whom you have ſo infamouſly inſulted, to her reſidence; my next ſhall be to demand an explanation of your conduct."

He then again ſeized the reluctant arm of Roſella, and walked off; whilſt one of the party repeated, in a loud bombaſtic tone,

"———Frowning he went;
"His eyes like meteors roll'd, then darted down
"Their red and angry beams; as if his ſight
"Would, like the raging dog-ſtar, ſcorch the earth,
"And kindle rivers in its courſe."

Oberne bit his lips violently, and hurried on in profound ſilence, which Roſella was not tempted to interrupt; and bitterly did ſhe regret that her complaiſance had betrayed her to ſuch diſgrace: but the mien of Oberne, who was ſoothing his meditated vengeance

vengeance by a ſoundleſs execration, forbade her to heighten his fury by indulging her own indignation.

When they reached the inn, Roſella flew to impart what had happened, to her friend, whilſt Oberne haſtened back to the Caſtle. Miſs Beauclerc could ſcarcely confine her ſatisfaction at this adventure within proper bounds. However, as ſhe now conſidered him to be moſt aſſuredly a ſerious lover of Roſella, ſhe reſolved to make the event a pretext to throw him from his hopes into the gulph of deſpair, by giving him his *congé*, and diſpenſing with his further attendance.

But Oberne appeared not till the next morning; and in the interim, Roſella repeated the little hiſtory he had given of himſelf: and Miſs Beauclerc, finding her ſurmiſes juſt with reſpect to his rank and family, altered her intention; immediately ſlew (in idea) the unworthy elder brother, a practice

tice much countenanced by many writers ſhe eſteemed, and giving Oberne the title of Lord Clanallan, which ſhe acknowledged to ſound at prettily as Morteyne, ſhe carried Roſella (ſtill in idea) moſt triumphantly to Caſtle Oberne, as the moſt virtuous and lovely bride in the world, after having overcome, as heroines do, the malice of her fate, and forced her enemies to confeſs that ſhe was the moſt prudent and amiable creature that had ever walked (in idea) the ſurface of the globe, notwithſtanding a number of very intricate and myſterious adventures, which required great ingenuity and perſeverance to explain even to the ſatisfaction of friends and admirers.

The breakfaſt was not removed before Oberne claimed admittance; but then, inſtead of creeping, ſighing, and kneeling like an offending lover, he marched into the room with his uſual air, and giving Roſella a paper, told her he hoped ſhe would accept the humble *amende* of the unfortunate miſ-

creants

creants who had incurred her diſpleaſure the preceding evening.

She opened it, and found a confeſſion of extreme miſbehaviour, and a ſolicitation of pardon and oblivion, ſigned by four names, including that of Povey. Roſella profeſſed herſelf ſatisfied that this unpleaſant affair had terminated; but not ſo Miſs Beauclerc—ſhe was extremely provoked at the ſeeming nonchalance of Oberne, when ſhe had expected at leaſt ſome ſword and piſtol buſineſs, even if ſhe had been diſappointed of the anguiſh and deſpair he ought to have exhibited. He perceived the diſpleaſure ſhe nouriſhed, and exerted himſelf to reſtore her good humour; but ſhe received his aſſiduities with coldneſs, and ſuddenly ordered a chaiſe to carry her from Dumbarton, without ſeeming to remember that Oberne had obtained her permiſſion to travel with her.

He obſerved the decay of his intereſt with a chagrin he could not conceal, though he

ſtill labored to appear unconcerned; and Roſella ſaw his extreme uneaſineſs with ſome compaſſion, for ſhe began to imagine that he was really attached to her friend, in ſpite of her age and her faded charms.

Miſs Beauclerc having quitted the room to give directions to Nancy, Oberne advanced to Roſella, and aſked if ſhe likewiſe condemned him for a caſualty it was not in his power to foreſee or avert.

"Or perhaps," continued he, "Miſs Beauclerc has heard of the meeting of laſt night, and diſapproves it. Yet what could I do? Was I to hear your name mentioned in my preſence in a light manner, and not puniſh ſuch inſolence?—No!—Miſs Beauclerc means, I ſuppoſe, to retract the permiſſion ſhe gave me to accompany her to the Lake; and if ſo, I ſhall have leiſure to ſettle this affair more to my ſatisfaction."

"For Heaven's ſake do not think any more of it," exclaimed Roſella, alarmed at

the threatened ſtorm; "is it not already ſettled—have I not received the apology?"

"But I find myſelf diſſatisfied with it," returned he. "Why is Miſs Beauclerc unjuſt enough to make me do penance for the impertinence by which I am equally aggrieved with herſelf?"

"Surely you muſt allow," ſaid Roſella, "that ſhe has ſufficient cauſe for vexation, in finding that I have been expoſed to the curioſity and cenſure of people, who have proved that their judgment of me is neither charitable nor juſt. I am ſorry you made my name a ſubject of conteſt, and I hope you will give up any idea of reviving it."

"I promiſe you," returned he, "that your name ſhall not be circulated in this curſed affair—no, my dear Miſs Montreſor, my amiable Roſella, theſe names are with me too ſacred to be repeated flippantly in my hearing, nor ſhall you be cenſured or inſulted with impunity in my preſence, whilſt I have breath."

Roſella

Roſella ſuppoſed, from the very animated manner in which he ſpoke, that he was burleſquing the knight-errant; and pleaſed that he had recovered his good-humour, which ſhe hoped would induce him to forget his fighting ſcheme, thanked him with a ſmiling countenance, and ran to aſſiſt in arranging the writings and books of her friend, which was a taſk not quickly performed.

When ſhe ſtepped into the chaiſe with Miſs Beauclerc, ſhe obſerved another in waiting for Oberne, who did not venture, however, to propoſe the exchange with Nancy, but contented himſelf with learning that the ladies were proceeding to the Loch, as they had intended: and in a ſhort time they arrived at Luſs, where Miſs Beauclerc was far from being diſpleaſed to behold him as aſſiduous as ever; for the prattle of Nancy had again raiſed Oberne to the poſt of honor in her opinion, by repeating what ſhe had heard at Dumbarton, of the duel at

which he had hinted. It appeared, when he was himſelf queſtioned on the ſubject, that Mr. Povey either was, or pretended to be unable to riſe from his bed to receive the ſatisfaction offered to him, and that Oberne, in the fury of his indignation, had challenged every one of the party, who drew lots for the firſt turn in this pleaſant buſineſs; but the *coup d'eſſai* of his piſtol ſending a bullet through the folds of his antagoniſt's cravat, the other offenders had interfered, and compromiſed the matter by the written apology, and a promiſe never to repeat the affair with the name of Miſs Montreſor attached to it.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Scots drover—darkening proſpects of a ſcandalized heroine.

AS it was rather late when the party reached Luſs, Miſs Beauclerc reſolved to poſtpone until the next morning, a voyage on the charming expanſe of water ſhe took much pleaſure in ſurveying. But Roſella, who was equally enchanted with the ſcene, could not controul her impatience to ſtroll out after dinner, though ſhe avoided the attendance of Oberne, that ſhe might not again be ſubjected to the ſhocking ſurmiſes of his gay aſſociates, ſhould chance and her evil deſtiny have conducted any of them to the banks of Loch Lomond. She therefore deſired

Nancy to accompany her, and taking her arm, walked to the borders of the Lake, and contemplated from an eminence the charming iſlands ſcattered over its boſom, beautified by ſeats and villas, and enlivened by the boats paſſing from the one to the other: the Grampian hills roſe from the north, and gave majeſty and grandeur to the intereſting ſcene.

But however Roſella might exclaim and admire, poor Nancy was entirely unable to comprehend the cauſe of ſuch raptures, as ſhe happened to have a ſick head-ach, and ſecretly wiſhed the whole country had been drowned in the river Coquet, before ſhe had been pulled off her chair to ſee it: ſhe was beſides extremely diſcompoſed at having been waited upon at her dinner by a Luſs gentlewoman, whoſe bare legs and feet were not quite ſo clean as ſhe thought neceſſary for the occaſion; and to crown her diſpleaſure, there was not a crumb of bread fit for a Chriſtian to eat—a misfortune in which though

though both Roſella and her miſtreſs participated, Nancy declared was not to be put up with, by people who had ſeen what was what in more genteeler and grander places.

Roſella finding that her companion was full of complaint, and obſerving that ſhe appeared indiſpoſed, would not continue to puniſh her for her own gratification; and tearing herſelf from a contemplation that ſo much delighted her, turned back towards the village.

A group of half-naked children with ruddy cheeks and golden hair, were playing by the ſide of the path ſhe walked: ſhe could not in the leaſt comprehend their language, but was pleaſed with their appearance, and diſtributed amongſt them ſome halfpence, which ſhe borrowed of Nancy: a generoſity that excited the moſt rapturous emotions in the little party, who hugged their bawbees, and ran before her, barefooted upon the rocky ground, without any ſymptom of pain or inconvenience, till

at length a little boy ſcarcely more than two years old, whoſe only garment was a ragged piece of plaid faſtened round his little body, tripped againſt a pointed crag, and ſeverely wounded his head in the fall.

Roſella very much ſhocked, and frightened at the cries of anguiſh he ſent forth, aſked where he lived, and deſired Nancy to help her carry the child home. It was ſome time before ſhe could make the others underſtand her queſtion, but at length they pointed to a forlorn hut not far from the place, and thither Roſella, with conſiderable labor conveyed the little ſufferer; for Nancy pretending that the ſight of blood made her ſick, did not deign to aſſiſt her.

As ſhe was toiling up an aſcent with the boy in her arms, and panting with the effort which compaſſion alone could have induced her to make, Oberne met her, and with an air of ſurpriſe demanded what had happened. She informed him; and being then

then arrived at the hut, the mother ran out, and took the unlucky bairn from her, with a look in which her concern for the child was overpowered by aſtoniſhment at the condeſcenſion of ſic a bra' young leddy.

Roſella followed her into her manſion; and the child having had his wound waſhed with ſome milk and water, which they were compelled to ſend to the next cottage for, ſhe had leiſure to examine the furniture and appendages of a Scotch hut, which was not ſuperior to any deſcription ſhe had ever met with of a Kamſchatſka dwelling. The roof was left partly open to admit the paſſage of the ſmoke, the walls were of mud, and the floor, like that upon which George Mompeſſon had laid his aching head in his retreat, was of earth, uncovered, unadorned, ſpreading her naked boſom to cradle her unadulterated children.

"Good God!" exclaimed Roſella, "I murmured lately at the hardneſs of my bed,

and felt diſguſted that it had been ſoiled by the preſſure of limbs perhaps exhauſted by fatigue, or enfeebled by ſickneſs!"

This apoſtrophe was unintentionally uttered aloud, and heard by Oberne, who unnoticed by her, ſtood at the entrance of the hut, and was examining her countenance and motions with great attention. As her eyes wandered round her, they were attracted by an earthen pot of oatmeal and water that was placed upon the peat-fire; and from reflecting upon the lodging of the poor Scottiſh peaſant, her ideas were now occupied in reviewing their hard fare.

She took a broken wooden ſpoon from a little ſhelf, and dipping it into the pottage, was going to taſte it; but the woman prevented her, ſaying in the Scottiſh dialect, that it was poor people's meat, and ſhe would not like it. Roſella would not however, be deterred from purſuing her intention, and finding the food unpalatable

enough, ſighed to reflect that hardly earned as it was, and ſparingly devoured, it ſhould be thought by many an Engliſh fine lady too coarſe to waſh her idle hands.

"Have you more children than this one?" aſked Roſella.

"I hae ten bonny bairns as ony in Scotland," replied the woman, "and their father deed bot twa months ſin, as he was ganging wi his kie to England."

"Going with what?" demanded Roſella.

The woman explained; and at length ſhe diſcovered that he had been a drover, and with indefatigable labor and ſelf-denial, having ſcraped together enough money to adventure a beaſt of his own in the Engliſh market, had ſold it to advantage; but was waylaid at his return, on the borders of Scotland, and the produce of his long-foſtered hopes torn from him by the hand of rapine. The ſhock and diſappointment affected his health, and his economy be-

coming even yet more rigid, would not ſuffer him to take enough ſuſtenance to ſupport him in his long journies, though all his meals were merely compoſed of a handful of oatmeal from the bag that hung at his back, and moiſtened in the pool by the road-ſide; till at length Death overtook him on the banks of the rapid Nith, where he had laid himſelf down to reſt, under the high-arched roof of Heaven, the turf his bed—a bed he had always choſen, becauſe when he roſe from it at the dawn of day, no ſurly landlord demanded a bawbee for the lodging of the night.

Roſella was affected by the tale, and ſtill more by the tears and hapleſs deſtiny of the widow and her ten bairns; and her hand, which was ever as prompt as the drops that now rolled from her eyes, ſoon teſtified her benevolence.

The poor woman beheld the piece of gold which had been given to her, in ſtupid amaze-

amazement ; and before ſhe recovered the recollection which ſo unexpected a viſion had taken away, her young benefactreſs had vaniſhed.

Oberne, who had ſtood immoveable until Roſella turned towards the door, on perceiving that ſhe meant to retire, haſtily moved away ; but not before ſhe had caught a glimpſe of his figure in his retreat. She felt however no wiſh either of avoiding or meeting him ; even the landſcape which a few minutes before had captivated her fancy, ſhe could not admire ; ſhe could think only of the poor drover expiring with fatigue and famine, his laſt ſigh mingling with the keen inhoſpitable blaſt that whiſtled round his unſheltered head.

Having rejoined Nancy, who had been very compoſedly nurſing her ailments on a rural ſeat near the hut, Roſella returned to her friend, and to intereſt her compaſſion and generoſity, related the little hiſtory with

with all the pathos ſhe was miſtreſs of; and her deſign was fully anſwered—for Miſs Beauclerc imagining the deceaſed drover to have been at leaſt an *emigré* Duke retired in this charming ſolitude from the cruel contumely of the world, and forgetting his former ſplendor in the delights of paſtoral labor, reſolved to reſtore the *ci-devant* beautiful Ducheſs to the comforts of competence and clean linen: but on a ſecondary conſideration, as Roſella repreſented her ſpeaking in a complete Scottiſh dialect, her opinion wavered, and ſhe concluded that the deceaſed was either a young Scotch Noble, or that his wife was of high birth, who marrying from inclination, without in the ſlighteſt degree conſulting prudence, had been driven by the cruelty of parents and relatives, to deſolate obſcurity; yet ſhe wondered much that the hut was not exquiſitely neat and white-waſhed, and that Roſella had not obſerved an inner apartment, ornamented with drawings and wooden-ſhelved bookcaſes, with a piano-forte in one corner,

and

and a lute hung careleſſly by a plaid ribbon upon a cane-bottomed London cottage-chair.

She had little doubt, however, but that the elder of the bonny bairns would ſuddenly, on a diſcovery, arrive at the honor of being ſtyled my Lord Blackcattle, or ſome other title, and all the little female ragamuffins become Lady Janes and Lady Jeſſys; a revolution by no means ſurpriſing in the annals of many a fair creature's family, whoſe adventures ſhe had read.

Miſs Beauclerc reſolved therefore to obtain a conference with the widow, and by inſinuating herſelf with the ſofteſt compaſſion into her confidence, procure a diſcloſure of her ſecret hiſtory; and whilſt ſhe was revolving a plan to effect ſo deſirable a point, without wounding the delicate feelings of the gentle cottager, Roſella repeated to Oberne, who had returned from his ramble, the good woman's lamentable ſituation, and the unfortunate event which had

had deprived her of her huſband, and with him of the means of ſupporting life.

He had before heard the whole ſtory, but would not interrupt her becauſe he was enchanted with the impreſſive grace with which ſhe told the tale—a grace he found irreſiſtible, as he was aſſured from conviction, that it was not a well-acted energy of feeling, to veil over a cold and ſelfiſh heart.

Miſs Beauclerc had not yet quite reſumed the cordiality ſhe had diſplayed to Oberne before the fracas at Dumbarton; but his good-humour and almoſt unceaſing attentions inſenſibly diſperſed the cloud, and at ſupper, to which he was invited, it wholly vaniſhed, when ſhe diſcovered that he had diſpatched an expreſs to Dumbarton to procure wheaten bread, which was produced at the meal, where he knew both Roſella and herſelf ate little elſe.

This

This inſtance of delicate attention reinſtated him fully in his former poſt of avowed eſcort to his fair companions, and on the next morning he acted as uſual, as maſter of the ceremonies in regulating their voyage to the iſlands of the Loch. But Miſs Beauclerc would not ſet out upon this expedition, delightful though the expectation of it was, until ſhe had made her intended viſit to her unfortunate *incognita*.

To the hut therefore ſhe went; but after a very minute and uſeleſs exordium to induce the afflicted widow to repoſe her private ſorrows in the faithful boſom of a new but tender and affectionate friend, ſhe found, to her unſpeakable diſappointment, that the poor woman was actually no other that the wife of a peaſant, whoſe father, inſtead of being the ennobled Lord of a fine old caſtle, containing a fine old ſkeleton, and a fine old myſterious manuſcript, was no other than a wretched fiſherman, who caught and cured herrings on the Iſle of Arran.

This

This being the caſe, for Miſs Beauclerc had never read of a gentle unfortunate refuſing her immediate confidence to the firſt-ſight ſympathy of a ſuſceptible traveller, ſhe contented herſelf with relieving her vulgar neceſſities, and leaving her to her fate; whilſt the woman and her ten bairns were rendered comparatively rich from her contributions, thoſe of Roſella, and the ſilent but liberal donation of Oberne.

At about eleven o'clock they took boat on the Lake, and the weather favored their excurſion. The firſt iſland they reached was Inchdavan, at the ſummit of whoſe higheſt rock even Miſs Beauclerc mounted, invalid as ſhe had been, to have a more perfect view of the ſcenery round her: here it was that Oberne felt jealous of the natural beauties of Scotland, and endeavored to extort from his fellow-travellers an engagement to extend their tour to his native ſhores. But Miſs Beauclerc without immediately refuſing his requeſt, would not ſhackle

ſhackle herſelf by an abſolute promiſe, and in this inſtance his rhetoric was ineffectual.

From Inchdavan they reſumed their boat to ſtrike acroſs the Lake; but as they paſſed Inch-monger, Roſella was ſo much pleaſed with the appearance of induſtry and independence it exhibited, that Miſs Beauclerc conſented to land the refreſhments with which the boat was ſtocked, and take them under a ſpreading tree upon the turf.

As they ſat, ſhe meditated very ſeriouſly upon the indecorum of returning to *terra-firma* without having encountered the leaſt adventure, ſuch as ought infallibly to befal every heroine, whenever ſhe attempts an aquatic expedition: and though her affection for Roſella forbade her even to wiſh that ſhe ſhould make the ſlighteſt experiment, by hazarding a falſe ſtep, or throwing herſelf overboard in a ſtart of fear, yet ſhe thought it incumbent on her to try how far the evident attachment of Oberne would

carry

carry him—for ſwim or not, a lover ſhould always plunge in, and dexterouſly bear a half-drowned angel, or even her ſinking *chaperon* ſafe to ſhore, whilſt the reſt of the party are wringing their hands, and ſhrieking her funeral knell in hopeleſs anguiſh. However as ſuch a perilous plan required a little conſideration, Miſs Beauclerc for the preſent contented herſelf with re-entering the boat, after their rural repaſt, with ſufficient circumſpection to avoid any diſaſter, deferring her meditated atchievement to a future opportunity.

As the party were proceeding to Ben Lomond, the Lake was ſuddenly overſpread with a thick miſt, that compelled them, much to their mortification, to return to ſhore, leaving the moſt pleaſant part of the excurſion for the next day.

At tea Miſs Beauclerc and her young companion again experienced the attention of Oberne, for their breakfaſt table in the morning

morning had exhibited various ſtrong ſymptoms of the poverty of their hoſt: but Roſella, far from being gratified by the intereſt he took in their better accommodation, was chagrined and hurt at every inſtance of it which he diſplayed at ſo conſiderable an expence.

He had told her that half his eſtate was already diſſipated, and ſhe feared the other half would not long remain in his poſſeſſion. He had not indeed expreſſly ſaid that his income was ſmall, but he had ſpoken of it in ſo modeſt a ſtyle, that ſhe preſumed it was not an extenſive one; and of his improvidence his own narrative had given ſtrong inſtances.

She was vexed too on her own account: for it was natural to ſuppoſe he would not have been ſo anxious to continue in their ſociety at ſo high a tax upon his time and purſe, without ſome proſpect of compenſation, either by making himſelf an intereſt in

in her heart, or ſecuring the fortune of Miſs Beauclerc by a marriage upon prudential motives. But as the character of Oberne opened to her obſervation, ſhe could not allow herſelf to attribute to him any mercenary views, and ſhe was almoſt compelled to acknowledge, from a retroſpection of his conduct, that it appeared more probable ſhe was the ſecret object of his too thoughtleſs and expenſive gallantries. Yet as this was only conjecture, and might be far from the truth, ſhe endeavored to continue towards him the ſame mode of behaviour ſhe had hitherto adopted. When Miſs Beauclerc retired however, for the night, Roſella having diſmiſſed Nancy, could not forbear repreſenting to her the increaſing uneaſineſs ſhe ſuſtained, from the perpetual expence into which Oberne plunged upon their account.

"I am far from approving it myſelf," replied Miſs Beauclerc, "and though I cannot but be gratified by the tender attachment

ment his conduct evinces, I will not ſuffer you, my dear Roſella, to bear the imputation of receiving attentions of a pecuniary nature from any man, however amiable. I have for ſome time," continued ſhe thoughtfully, "been alarmed at the increaſing paſſion of poor Oberne; becauſe I fear it will not be in my power to reward it as my inclination directs, and therefore I wiſhed him to tear himſelf away at this place; but his earneſt ſolicitations to continue with us till we reach Perth, my compaſſion unhappily yielded to, in ſpite of rigid prudence."

"It is even ſo," thought Roſella: "Oberne pretends to be in love with her—what will Mr. Mordaunt ſay if ſhe marries ſo young a man!"

"My poor Selina," added Miſs Beauclerc, "has unconſciouſly increaſed my dilemma, by informing me, that through ſome channel ſhe cannot diſcover, our adventure at Stanmore Hills has been mentioned to Mr. Mordaunt; nay even our alarm

alarm at Edinburgh and our meeting with Oberne, have been moſt cruelly miſrepreſented by ſome ſecret but well-informed enemy, who for a ſiniſter purpoſe evidently watches all our motions."

Roſella had ſhuddered with all the horror of timid innocence, from the opprobrium of the world; and now at the idea of a ſecret enemy, envenomed with hatred to a degree that could alone animate him to take ſuch uncommon trouble to injure them, ſhe felt her terrors riſe; her head became giddy, ſhe grew ſick, and after ſtruggling a few moments with her emotions, loſt all ſenſation.

The agony of Miſs Beauclerc at this unexpected effect of her ſublime communication, cannot be deſcribed: ſhe flew round the room in unreflecting anguiſh, wrung her hands, and ſcreamed for help. The houſe was ſmall, and her cries ſoon diſtinguiſhed. The firſt perſon who ruſhed into the apartment

ment was Oberne, who, on beholding Roſella extended upon the floor, pale and without motion, exhibited as many ſymptoms of diſtraction as Miſs Beauclerc.

"What has happened?" exclaimed he. "Roſella, deareſt Roſella, are you ill?—God of Heaven, ſhe is ſenſeleſs!"

By this time ſeveral people were collected at the room-door, and the woman of the houſe entered with Nancy.

"Send this moment," cried Oberne—"where's Patrick, where's my ſervant?"

"The gentleman's in the kitchen," returned Nancy. "Oh Lord, poor dear Miſs Montreſor! that ever we ſhould have coomed to ſuch a place! They have poiſoned her with their dirt and filth!"

The landlady's red hair briſtled with reſentment at this affront, but ſhe was ſilent.

"Be quiet," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc angrily; "get ſome more water; ſtay—rub her hands!"

Oberne, with the rapidity of lightning, did both, and Roſella revived; not to thank him for his cares, but to turn from him with a repugnance, and a look of horror, as potent as that of a faſhionable lady, who unexpectedly beholds at the corner of St. James's-Street, or any other ſtreet, a diſguſting picture of ſickneſs and famine cloſe at her well-turned elbow, imploring her to beſtow what ſhe does not poſſeſs—money, and endeavoring to excite what ſhe never felt—charity.

Miſs Beauclerc now reflected that it would be proper to diſmiſs Oberne, and ſhut the chamber-door. He entreated before he withdrew, that ſhe would ſend for advice if Miſs Montreſor continued indiſpoſed; and telling her that his ſervant, whom he had appointed to meet him at that place, was

was arrived, and wholly at her ſervice, enquired, with a look of ſolicitude, if Roſella had been alarmed.

"Yes," returned Miſs Beauclerc, in a heſitating accent; "no—not alarmed, but ſhe has been much ſhocked—that is—but I will inform you to-morrow."

Not at all ſatisfied with this broken intimation, he departed very reluctantly, to amuſe, if he could, his curioſity and concern with all the conjectures a lively imagination and apprehenſive mind could ſuggeſt. The ſervant of whom he had ſpoken, had brought him letters from Edinburgh, by no means ſo pleaſing or entertaining as he could have wiſhed—letters which reflected reproach upon his underſtanding, for ſuffering himſelf to be drawn into the lure of two travelling adventurers; a report then paſſing current, from a tolerably juſt detail his companions had repeatedly given of the playhouſe *rencontre*.

When Roſella had wholly recovered, and again found herſelf *tête-à-tête* with her friend, ſhe implored her with all the eloquence her diſtreſs inſpired, no longer to ſuffer the attendance of Oberne.

"You promiſed poor Simpſon," added ſhe, "to ſend him word when he ſhould rejoin us: perhaps he is now able to follow you hither. If we have enemies, which Heaven forbid, will they not remark upon your travelling ſo far without any attendant but Nancy? and indeed I have often wiſhed, upon his account, to be informed of his ſituation, when I recollect how feeble and diſpirited he appeared."

"I will ſend to him to join us at Perth," replied Miſs Beauclerc: "but, my dear Roſella, if I retract the permiſſion I have given Oberne to accompany us there, I muſt give him a reaſon for ſo doing; and to diſſipate any miſtaken idea of capricious coldneſs on my part, I believe it will be beſt to aſſign the true one; for I have now received

ceived ſuch unequivocal proofs of his tenderneſs, that I would not occaſion him an unneceſſary pang."

"Would to Heaven," thought Roſella, "we had never ſeen him! How can my poor friend be ſo weak as to think of ſuch nonſenſe, when her character, through his means, is ſo cruelly arraigned!"

Again the humiliating ſenſation which the undeſired ſociety of Oberne had originally given her, recurred with increaſed force, and ſhe reſolved, not without a mixture of ſpleen in her prudence, that ſince Miſs Beauclerc prized his boaſted tenderneſs ſo as to prefer it to reputation, her preſence ſhould not often interrupt the expreſſion of it, as ſhe ſuſpected it might hitherto have done.

Nay her ill-humour prompted anew the plan of writing to Mr. Mordaunt or her guardian, to propoſe her return to his houſe; but the recollection of its gloomy dulneſs,

and of its maſter's economic lectures, joined to the ſhame of encountering the regards of people, who no doubt had joined her name with that of Miſs Beauclerc in their condemning ſtrictures, made her haſtily abandon the idea.

She could not ſleep; and amongſt the mortifying reflections that aſſailed her during the long uneaſy night, the remembrance of her laſt *rencontre* with Mr. Delamere, his ſtrange manner, and ſtill more tormenting gift, haunted her recollection, and ſhe was tempted to believe that he was the author of the officious reports to her diſadvantage and that of Miſs Beauclerc: and to complete the chagrin ſhe experienced, ſhe imagined that if he had not received the note ſhe had been ſo careleſſly haſty in returning, he might further repreſent her as having ſolicited and received pecuniary favors from his compaſſion.

Theſe

Theſe ſurmiſes baniſhed every favorable ſentiment ſhe had once entertained of him; and Oberne, who had never wounded her ſelf-love by ill-founded reproach the effect of appearances too ſeverely conſtrued, but had ever ſeemed to regard her with the reſpect ſhe coveted, was thought amiable by the contraſt; but he again forfeited her eſteem by aiming to gratify either a propenſity to ridicule or avarice, in the particular admiration ſhe ſuppoſed him to have avowed for Miſs Beauclerc.

Haraſſed and unrefreſhed, Roſella roſe in the morning, hating the idea of meeting Oberne, but not chuſing to awaken the alarm of her friend, by remaining in her chamber under pretext of indiſpoſition. Before ſhe deſcended to breakfaſt, he had twice enquired by Nancy if ſhe were quite recovered, and if he might hope to greet her in the ſitting-room; and ſhe wondered this aſſiduity did not occaſion any diſplea-

ſure in his miſtreſs, who, on the contrary, appeared only deſirous to ſoften his anxiety.

At length Roſella attended the breakfaſt table, to which Miſs Beauclerc had previouſly adjourned, and as ſhe opened the door, ſhe heard her ſay—

"Enquire of herſelf—here ſhe is!"

"My dear Miſs Montreſor," cried Oberne, "you look pale; you are not quite well yet!"

"I feel rather indiſpoſed," ſaid Roſella coldly, "and will requeſt Miſs Beauclerc to leave me here whilſt you accompany her to the Lake."

"It is impoſſible we can leave you," exclaimed he eagerly; "your friend I am ſure will defer the excurſion."

"Moſt certainly I ſhall," replied Miſs Beauclerc.

Roſella ſuffered the argument to drop; for ſhe was too languid to converſe, and too heart-

heart-ſick to care much what effect her ſilence would have. Oberne too, was far from being in his uſual ſpirits; but as they were in him conſtitutional, they appeared ſometimes by flaſhes, and it was only at intervals that he looked thoughtful and uneaſy.

After breakfaſt, Miſs Beauclerc declaring her intention of retiring for an hour or two to write letters, Roſella was careful to quit the room before ſhe left it; and then, without any inclination to occupy herſelf, ſhe ſat in her chamber, holding her aching temples, ſilent and ſolitary, until Nancy made her *entré* in a moſt extraordinary flow of ſpirits, apparently brimful of intelligence, which without any ſolicitation ſhe ſoon began to pour out; and Roſella had the ſatisfaction of hearing that Mr. Patrick thought her exceedingly handſome, and did not wonder that his maſter ſlighted the London lady; for Mr. Patrick himſelf could

never keep conſtant to an old ſweetheart whenever he ſaw a prettier.

"I do not wiſh to hear ſuch nonſenſe," ſaid Roſella, with ſome anger.

"Lorrk-a-mighty, Miſs!" exclaimed Nancy, "I never ſee you ſo croſs-grained before! I am ſure Mr. Patrick ſaid no harm, or I ſhould not have coomed to tell you—only he ſaid, his maſter's brother, Lord Clinking, or Clanking, or ſomewhat, was very angry that Mr. Oberne had left his ſweetheart, and that he had been told a heap of ſtories of his ſpending all his money upon good-for-nought minxes all round the country of North Britain—God-a-mighty knows where that is! But I told Mr. Patrick I was glad he had coomed to ſee it was no ſuch thing, for his maſter had been with my ladies morning, noon, and night, as one may ſay, ever ſin they coomed from Edinburgh."

"Good

"Good God, how teaſing!" exclaimed Roſella.

"Lorrk no, Miſs," reſumed Nancy, "Mr. Patrick laughed fit to crack his ſides!"

Roſella now found her patience exhauſted, and deſired Nancy to leave the room, which the girl had ſcarcely done before ſhe burſt into a paſſion of tears, and imagining that the good opinion of the world was to her irretrievably loſt, gave herſelf up to deſpair. After having remained ſome time abſorbed in the moſt tormenting reflections, her ſolitude was interrupted by Miſs Beauclerc, who was terrified at the condition in which ſhe found her; and rightly gueſſing the cauſe of thoſe tears, whoſe traces were yet viſible in the pallid cheek of Roſella, ſhe eagerly promiſed to diſmiſs Oberne, and reſtore her tranquillity by every means in her power.

Accuſtomed as Roſella had been to indulgence from her fanciful yet kind friend,

ſhe was ſurpriſed at the important ſacrifice ſo readily made to her ſcruples—a ſacrifice ſhe had not however inſincerity or complaiſance enough to oppoſe by the fainteſt conteſt, becauſe her delicacy ought, ſhe ſecretly thought, to have been ſeconded at leaſt, even if it had not been directed by her older companion:—ſhe therefore received the offer of Oberne's diſmiſſion with an emotion of thankfulneſs; and it was ſettled that Miſs Beauclerc ſhould immediately intimate her intention of foregoing the pleaſure of his company after they quitted Luſs.

She deſcended to their ſitting-room to announce their approaching ſeparation, and found him in a meditation ſo profound, that ſhe was well aſſured his volatile ſpirits could only have ſuffered ſuch a revolution by the almighty power of heroic love. His firſt enquiry was for the health of Roſella, and his next for the ſubject of the alarm or ſhock ſhe had received the preceding even-

ing,

ing, which he had not yet had an opportunity of learning.

"The cruel and unjuſt world," replied Miſs Beauclerc, with unuſual dignity, "is never ſo rigid as when a young, lovely, and innocent girl is arraigned before its tribunal."

Oberne ſtared at this comment, and his attention to the explanation of it redoubled.

"My timid Roſella," continued the lady, "is not equal to meeting its ſtern inquiſition or rebuke, and I would not wiſh her to combat its reproach, even with a placid conſcience for her auxiliary!"

"In the name of God, my dear Madam, explain yourſelf!" exclaimed Oberne impatiently.

"To a man of delicacy," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc, "I have ſurely ſufficiently explained my meaning; and you muſt comprehend enough of it not to be ſurpriſed if I decline

very peremptorily the honor of your attendance from this hour!"

He made no reply to this heart-rending inſtance of cruelty, but appeared to reflect for a moment, and then darted out of the room with a precipitation that half terrified and half delighted Miſs Beauclerc, who waited a conſiderable time for the report of the piſtol ſhe concluded the diſconſolate hero had gone in queſt of; but hearing nothing of it, ſhe was on the point of ſallying out to enquire by what method the poor youth had ſlipped out of the world, and eluded the peculiar anguiſh of his fate, when her intention was ſuſpended from ſurpriſe, occaſioned by the moſt violent outcries, lamentations, and oaths uttered in a ſtrong brogue, with ſupplications and adjurations dancing on a Scotch dialect, accompanied by female ſhrieks, and theſe again interrupted by threats of future vengeance, independent of preſent puniſhment.

The

The laſt mentioned ſound, though ſcarcely articulated from exceſſive rage, Miſs Beauclerc fancied to proceed from the lips of the heart-broken Oberne, and what the uproar portended ſhe was at a loſs to gueſs: the ſolemnity of the preſent criſis could not long outbalance her vehement curioſity to learn it, and ſhe repaired to the ſcene of contention, where ſhe beheld the repulſed lover brandiſhing a whip inſtead of a ſword, and Roſella, who from time to time earneſtly conjured him to moderate his wrath, had only the power of mitigating the chaſtiſement he was inflicting upon a man, whoſe collar he graſped: whilſt Nancy wept bitterly, and tore her hair in concert with Mr. Patrick, the culprit, who ſeemed only intent upon ſtripping his head of its honors, and again applying to himſelf every villanous name his obliging maſter had before inveſted him with.

A Scotch laſſie, who thought Mr. Patrick a vara bonny loon, was in her haſte to be

attended to, bawling out a remonſtrance in the Erſe language, which Mr. Patrick comprehending, bade her hould her tongue, and not be after axing pardon for him, unleſs ſhe would firſt lend him a cord to hang himſelf a little, for being ſuch a d--m--d ſpalpeen to a better maſter tan ever croſſed the Channel.

Miſs Beauclerc conceiving this ſtrange affray to be beneath the interference of Roſella, and not perceiving any ſigns of its ending in a ſentimental tragedy, called to her to re-enter the houſe; for the ſcene lay in a yard, flanked on one ſide by the road, and on the other by a convenient horſe-pond, to which Oberne had almoſt dragged his ſelf-condemned priſoner.

But Roſella heard her not, and before the ſtorm was in the leaſt allayed, a very brilliant travelling chaiſe paſſed the road, followed by two or three others; and Miſs Beauclerc obeyed an impulſe of curioſity in endea-

endeavoring to diſcover who occupied the firſt, which had ſtopped before the little inn whilſt a ſervant made ſome enquiries, when a tumult of emotions was excited in her boſom, by diſcerning rather unexpectedly Lord Mortēyne, ſeated by a very pretty woman, who was regarding Roſella with looks of concern and ſurpriſe, which his Lordſhip did not diminiſh by a narrative he was apparently giving of the object thus ſcrutinized.

"Oh my Lord," thought Miſs Beauclerc, with a mixture of diſdain and exultation, "you likewiſe believe theſe calumniating ſtories of your once beloved Roſella! But though you imagine your horrible derelict-tion unknown to her, be aſſured you ſhall, like other raſh and jealous lovers, bitterly repent your ſhocking credulity."

This prophetic idea had ſcarcely croſſed her imagination before the carriages drove away, and Roſella remained wholly unconſcious

ſcious that ſhe had been thus recognized by an old acquaintance.

By perſuaſion and intreaty ſhe at length induced Oberne to leave the offender to his own contrition, which he manifeſted by a variety of emotions; and his maſter in the firſt moment of returning reflection, aſhamed of having diſplayed ſuch a want of ſelf-controul, withdrew haſtily from the preſence of Roſella, who by compaſſionating the object of his vehement anger, more than tacitly condemned it.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

A parting ſcene—a heroine's retreat champêtre.

WHEN Roſella rejoined her friend, ſhe learned that a circumſtance had occurred to urge the continuation of their journey immediately, and wondered exceedingly what event of importance could have reached her in the ſpace of ten minutes; but recollecting how much her friend ſometimes amuſed her imagination with ſuppoſitious affairs, ſhe concluded it was one of thoſe fabulous exigences which had more than once in the courſe of their tour guided her motions.

Oberne

Oberne meantime heard the order given for a chaiſe for the ladies, and ſtarting from his ſolitary trance, flew to enquire the reaſon of ſuch an unexpected precipitation: happening to encounter Roſella in his ſearch, he aſked with rapidity whither ſhe was going; and ſhe declared, with truth, that ſhe knew not."

"That is you do not wiſh to tell me. Are you going towards Perth?" reſumed he, after a moment's pauſe.

"I am entirely ignorant of the route Miſs Beauclerc means to take," replied ſhe, "but I believe not."

Again he re-urged his firſt queſtion, and ſhe made the ſame reply.

"Tell me at leaſt," ſaid Oberne, "the motive for this ſudden movement: it is, I ſuppoſe, in conſequence of the impertinence of that fellow, which reached you through Nancy?"

"Indeed

"Indeed you diſtreſs me," ſhe replied, "becauſe I cannot anſwer you!"

"Miſs Montreſor," exclaimed Oberne ſuddenly, "tell me with ſincerity the opinion you have formed of me. I know you think me a ſtrange mortal, incapable of reflecting ſeriouſly; fooliſh, extravagant in conduct and idea, giddy, fickle, impetuous, and unmeaning."

"If you know all this," ſaid Roſella, half ſmiling, "why do you apply to me? Will it be any ſatisfaction to have this idea of your's confirmed?"

"No: I ſhould, on the contrary, be charmed to find that my fears were unfounded."

"Well then I beg you to believe that they are: for I cannot yet think myſelf qualified by experience to form any deciſive judgment of your character."

"I ſuſpect," ſaid Oberne, "that hitherto I have not had any—at leaſt I find myſelf under the influence of a new character within a very limitted time. To have done however

ever with an unworthy ſubject, let me quit it to inform you, that I ſhall not oppoſe the promiſe Miſs Beauclerc condeſcended to make, to her preſent determination of diſcarding me, becauſe I feel equally indignant with her at the odious imputation her generoſity and candid reliance upon me have drawn upon her—an imputation I ſhall aſſuredly endeavor to wipe off before I ſee you again. And now, dear Miſs Montreſor, let me entreat that you will forgive the ſhock that fellow's inſolence and folly, and the ſilly prattle of Nancy have occaſioned you; and believe that from the firſt hour I ſaw you, I have not for a moment entertained an opinion I would not freely avow to your moſt zealous champion. Miſs Beauclerc does me injuſtice in affecting to hide from me the route ſhe means to take; I have too much reſpect for you and her to diſcover it without her permiſſion; but as I am fortunately acquainted with her Engliſh reſidence, I will not deſpair of being able to renew the pleaſure I have enjoyed in your

your ſociety, with a better recommendation to your favor than idleneſs and aſſurance. You will be next winter ſtill under her protection I hope?"

"I cannot decide for myſelf," returned Roſella; "my ſtay with Miſs Beauclerc depends upon her invitation, and the indulgence of my guardian."

"Your guardian! I ſuppoſed—I thought you—excuſe me, dear Miſs Montreſor, if I take the liberty of enquiring if he is the guardian of your perſon alone, or your fortune likewiſe?"

"Of both," replied ſhe, wondering where theſe enquiries would end.

"Then I have been in an error," ſaid Oberne gravely: "to deal frankly with you, I imagined you to be as deſtitute of fortune as you abound in every amiable quality."

"Am I to ſuppoſe then," ſaid Roſella, rather indignantly, "that ſuch a circumſtance has influenced your conduct?"

"Certainly

"Certainly had I been better informed, I ſhould not have followed you from Edinburgh."

"Followed *me!*" interrupted ſhe, ſtill more irritated, "do you ſay you followed me?"

"Yes, I have the preſumption to ſay it: I ſhould not have been abſent from Edinburgh twelve hours, had you not accompanied Miſs Beauclerc." Be not, however, angry—I acknowledged to you that I had diſſipated half my fortune, not very ſplendid originally, and with the other half I would have offered you my unworthy ſelf, had you been at liberty to encourage or reject me, and had you not been above my hopes: as it is, I muſt bid you adieu, with the additional mortification of feeling thoſe wiſhes cruſhed which I have for ſome time paſt fooliſhly cheriſhed."

Without waiting her anſwer, he left the room; and Roſella, from ſurpriſe and confuſion, had not the power of preventing him,

him, that ſhe might explain from mere humility, that he carried with him an erroneous ſuppoſition, if he imagined the fortune ſhe had ſpoken of even approached to mediocrity. She ran to the window in the hope of ſeeing him paſs it, but he had wholly vaniſhed; and Miſs Beauclerc calling to her almoſt immediately, to enquire if ſhe were ready, ſhe haſtened to obey the intimation, and followed her into the chaiſe a few minutes after, without again beholding the eccentric Oberne, whoſe abſence ſhe had ſo often wiſhed, and now almoſt regretted.

Nancy was ſtill ſobbing at intervals, and ſecretly deploring that her too flippant tongue had cauſed, as ſhe imagined, two ſuch great diſaſters as the diſgrace of Mr. Patrick, and the parting of Miſs Roſella from her true lover; for ſuch ſhe conſidered Oberne. And her diſcontent was increaſed by an attack which had been made upon her by the landlady, who had plainly hinted

that ſhe would ſcorn to ſerve people who did not know their own minds; for her part, if ſhe had known the leddies were going away, ſhe might have had a great Laird and aw his family at her hooſe, which would have made the fortune of her and her gude mon.

Miſs Beauclerc ſat immerſed in the ſublimity of thoſe adventures, ſhe was now purſuing with an avidity, that would not allow her leiſure to finiſh her ſurvey of the beautiful Lake ſhe had ſo much deviated out of her road to ſee: and ſo rapidly did her ideas hurry her forward, that ſhe could not even ſpare one look of approbation at the romantic ſcenery ſhe was ſo eager to quit, but fixed her eyes upon the trotting hoofs of the galloways that bore her away, calculating how ſoon ſhe ſhould leave behind her Loch Lomond and its charming iſlands, and the lovely vale of Tarbet, with its eaſtern boundary of water.

Roſella

Roſella had therefore full liberty to purſue her own reflections, which led her to examine the previous conduct of her friend, and the ſtrange unpleaſant ſituations which had been the reſult of it: and ſo far was ſhe then from deploring the injuſtice of the world, that ſhe could not but acknowledge, thoſe reports which had reached her ear, were but the natural inferences to be drawn from a mode of acting ſo ſingular and unaccountable. She became, in conſequence, anxious to learn whither the whimſical genius of her friend would point; and without any preface, made an enquiry into their preſent deſtination.

Miſs Beauclerc replied that ſhe had not any ſettled plan, but having much curioſity to behold the Grampian mountains, ſhe ſhould journey in the direction they took.

Roſella perceiving ſome reſerve in her manner whilſt ſhe returned this vague anſwer, ſuſpected an achievement *in petto*,

which ſhe was not yet to be made acquainted with, and looked forward to it with apprehenſion and anticipated diſguſt. She conceived that to heſitate taking any ſtep at the preſent moment, however unpleaſant, to reſcue herſelf from the malicious ſneers of thoſe, who having already learned their adventures, and poured them with cruel comments into the ear of Mr. Mordaunt, a man whoſe eſteem and friendſhip ſhe highly prized, would be to deſerve and wait for further opprobrium: and in ſpite of the innate affection ſhe ſtill retained for Miſs Beauclerc, ſhe reſolved to give up the pleaſing expectations ſhe had lately found ſo little realized in her ſociety, and voluntarily return to dulneſs and diſcord, as an aſylum from cenſure.

When they reſted for the night, ſhe preferred her claim to the offered advice of her old and ſage friend, through the channel of a letter, written without the knowledge of Miſs Beauclerc; but ſhe could not ſend it off

off until they ſtopped at ſome town for a few days, that ſhe might have a chance of receiving an anſwer. She deprecated the opinion Mr. Mordaunt might form of her, from not receiving any appeal to his kindneſs, after he had heard ſuch a detail of her journey, as Mrs. Ellinger had tranſmitted an account of to Miſs Beauclerc, of whom Roſella ſpoke without diſreſpect, though ſhe acknowledged that the reports in circulation, however cruelly exaggerated or miſrepreſented the circumſtances might be to which they related, were yet not wholly without foundation: ſhe then entreated his aid to extricate her from her preſent ſituation, without offending Miſs Beauclerc, or wounding that affection which had induced her to beſtow favors and benefits, ſhe could never think of without the warmeſt gratitude.

This epiſtle Roſella reſerved very carefully to the moment when ſhe might put it into a poſt with a chance of catching the

wiſhed-for reply; and as her mind was rather calmed after having decided upon a ſtep ſo prudent, ſhe found herſelf ſufficiently diſengaged to remark upon the uncommon enthuſiaſm which had taken poſſeſſion of her ſtrange and romantic friend, who compared the Grampian hills to the Alps, the Appenines, and the Pyrenees; and the river Tay, with its diſtant Loch, to each ſublime ſtream of which ſhe had ever read.

Their progreſs was ſlow, for the road was hilly and mountainous; but the almoſt inſufferable tedioulneſs of every aſcent, was amply rewarded by a view of the intervening vales, ſweetly wild, almoſt invariably watered by a winding ſtream, and generally well wooded.

In one of theſe, about five miles ſouth of Dunkeld, Miſs Beauclerc loitered near an hour, taking the dinner ſhe had had the precaution to provide at the laſt town, at the foot of a mountain, down whoſe rocky boſom

boſom a natural caſcade fell into the Tay, which circuited round a ſmall but pleaſant wood, to viſit the ſpot, and receive the falling tribute into its own waves.

"I ſhould much like," exclaimed Miſs Beauclerc, "to paſs a few weeks in this lovely ſpot; but I fear I ſhall not here meet with a cottage to ſuit my purpoſe."

"All thoſe I have hitherto obſerved," replied Roſella, "are really not ſo good as Engliſh piggeries: a cottage in the environs of London, fitted up with French windows, treillage paper, and cane chairs, and a cottage at the foot of the Grampian hills, are very different things I perceive."

"Perhaps we may have the good fortune," reſumed Miſs Beauclerc with a ſmile, "to find the deſerted habitation of ſome elegant recluſe, whoſe taſte and labours may have rendered it preciſely what a delicate and cultivated mind might wiſh."

Roſella made no reply, but ſincerely hoped they might not fall into the track of any elegant recluſe, who had been capable of executing ſo mad a ſcheme.

Miſs Beauclerc at length condeſcended to reſume her journey, and proceeded to Dunkeld, where ſhe ſlept; and on the next morning at an early hour ſent to the houſe of a perſon in the place, with whom ſhe ſaid ſhe had buſineſs; and her note was immediately anſwered by the appearance of an obſequious North Briton, who was, he affirmed, the vara parſon Maiſter Mac-clood had mentioned to the leddy, and after a few compliments, and many profeſſions of devotion to the intereſt of ſic aimable parſonages, he proceeded, as a matter of courſe, to deſcribe the moſt charming dwelling in the whole iſland; a deleetful cottage, only two ſitting rooms and a ſmall kitchen below, and three lodging rooms above, but vara taſtefully fitted up and furniſhed by an unfortunate leddy, who was prevented from finding

finding it the aſylum ſhe had hoped for herſelf and her children, by the folly of a jealous loon of a huſband, who made her quit her ain coontra, and follow him to another, whither he was baniſhed by his ain extravagance and diſſipation. The praſpeects were the moſt romantic in aw Scotland, and it was not more than twa miles from the rumbling brig, a majeſtic caſcade as ony in Europe. An Edinburgh painter had taken views to the extent of five miles round, which views were hung up in the cottage; and it likewiſe contained a piano-forte, and ſundry inſtruments particulareeſed in the leeſt of the furniture and appurtenances.

"I am perfectly ſatisfied with this account of my future reſidence," interrupted Miſs Beauclerc; "I have already inſtructed my agent in London to pay the ſum demanded, and I hear that I can have immediate poſſeſſion."

"Maiſter Mac-clood," the Scot replied, "had deſired him to accede to the leddy's

wiſhes in that reſpect, and ſhe might act as ſhe thought proper as to inſtant reſidence: and even if any thing intervened to prevent the agreement from taking place, of which he hoped there wad be leetel probabeelity, ſhe, as a tenant, might ſotisfee ony demand of the landleddy, by the year or the quarter."

Miſs Beauclerc was evidently delighted with this prompt method of proceeding, and after ſettling a few neceſſary preliminaries, ſhe departed the next morning from Dunkeld with Roſella and Nancy, accompanied by Maiſter Craufurd, who undertook to eſcort them to the Scotch paradiſe he had ſo eloquently deſcribed. Yet Roſella had ſo little expectation of ſatisfaction from it, that ſhe dated her letter, with a memorandum that the reply was to be addreſſed to her at the houſe of Mr. Craufurd, who was to receive and forward the correſpondence of Miſs Beauclerc, and then contrived to ſend it to the poſt before ſhe left the town, with a ſincere hope that

that Mr. Mordaunt would comply with the wiſh it contained.

After a ſhort ride through a country, which it required no ingenuity of the Scot to perſuade the ladies was beautifully romantic, he pointed out to Miſs Beauclerc her new abode, and ſhe found it to exceed even what her enthuſiaſtic imagination had formed of divine. It was now the beginning of July, and the weather, which in the Scottiſh highlands was then little more than of a pleaſurable warmth, had given fragrance to the herbage, and ſcented the air for a conſiderable diſtance with the ſhrubs and wild flowers tranſplanted from a more ſouthern ſoil, and diſpoſed with conſiderable judgment in a lovely glen, where a branch of the Tay meandered in ſtillneſs, until it was joined by a brawling ſtream that ruſhed from a neighbouring rock, and then they flowed together with an impetuous motion, and ſhook the freſhened air with their murmurs.

The cottage itſelf had been newly white-waſhed, and partially gliſtened from behind a green treillage covering the front and one ſide, and placed about half a foot from the building, that the dews hanging upon the leaves of the wild roſe and honeyſuckle creeping over it, might not affect the apartments with damp; the windows were caſements, but very neatly glazed and leaded, and reflected very brightly the ſun-beam darted againſt them; and a rural portico open to the inſpection of the paſſing obſerver, diſcovered a little greenhouſe, fancifully arranged with pots of flowers, ſo as to reſemble a luxuriant arbour.

To the north, the cottage was ſheltered by a gentle aſcent, covered with a grove of firs, interſperſed with beech; and though the rays of the riſing ſun could ſalute it from the eaſt, yet its wintry blaſts were intercepted by the angle of the wood, which terminated by degrees, till at length a few ſcattered trees alone ſhaded the plain, and waved

waved their branches in lofty pride over the reflecting bofom of the river.

Mifs Beauclerc was ſpeechleſs with delight, and Roſella with admiration; and with ſenſations widely different from the methodical apathy of their guide, Mr. Craufurd, liſtened or ſeemed to liſten to his commendation of the perfect repair of the houſe: he obſerved that the thatched roof was of reeds, and very durable—indeed it would laſt as long as he did; that the chimnies had not been built more than three months, and were conſtructed with an equal attention to ſtrength and convenience, as well as adapted to the ſimplicity of the building.

He made the ladies remark a well, which the landlady had been at a conſiderable expence to clear of weeds and rubbiſh, and ſo conveniently ſituated, that the laſſie inſtead of running every hour with her pitcher to the river, would get a bucket of water

water in two minutes: he uſhered them in at the back door, that they might behold a little poultry yard and fuel-ſhed, and a pig-ſty, the whole being part and parcel of the building.

But Miſs Beauclerc was paying much greater attention to a pretty entrance contrived from a little flower-garden on the ſouth ſide: it was formed like a lean-to, having a ſloping roof of rough branches of trees overlaid with ruſhes; the wall was raiſed with lath and plaiſter, lined in the inſide with a paper to repreſent a ruſtic railing, overrun with flowering weeds and high graſs, and the floor was paved irregularly with ſmall pebbles. It led to a little ſtudy, or muſic-room, for it was both the one and the other, being decorated on every ſide with light caſes of painted deal, filled with books elegantly bound; and in a receſs ſtood the piano-forte Mr. Craufurd had ſpoken of, of a ſmall ſize, adapted to the ſituation it filled. Beneath it, Roſella, who followed her friend in mute wonder, ſaw a

viola and two more inſtruments in caſes, which ſhe afterwards learned were a lute and an Æolian harp.

"An aſylum for an unfortunate lady and her children!" repeated ſhe internally, as Mr. Craufurd's explanation roſe to her recollection. "Good God! if this was the unfortunate lady's idea of an economical retreat, I do not wonder that the unfortunate gentleman, her huſband, was baniſhed from his native land by the diſſipation of his property!"

Mr. Craufurd was now attending to the ſafe diſpoſal of the baggage, for which he had not only engaged the aſſiſtance of Nancy, but had likewiſe dragged a Scotch ſervant-girl from the hole ſhe had fled to, at the approach of ſuch magnificent perſonages.

Miſs Beauclerc, relieved therefore from his tireſome obſervations, fully ſatisfied her curioſity

curioſity and expectation, by ſurveying every apartment with rapturous avidity. The deſigns of the Edinburgh painter were in the room adjoining the ſtudy, into which it opened; and when Miſs Beauclerc entered it, ſhe would certainly have honored it with the appellation of a drawing-room, had not the faſcinating epithet of *the cottage* recurred to her; and ſhe then reflected that there was no ſuch place in a captivating retreat of that kind. She contented herſelf with calling it ſimply a ſitting-room, whilſt ſhe admired the elegant neatneſs of the furniture, the charming lightneſs of the paper, and the excellent effect of the beautiful views hung over it, which ſhe reſolved however to diſplace as faſt as poſſible, and ſubſtitute the copies Roſella was inſtantly to ſet about, becauſe all heroines in ſuch a ſituation ſhould be artiſts.

The cabriole chairs and ottomane to ſuit the furniture, and the carpet, which actually ſeemed to be the ſame on which "the hare-bell

bell and violet grew," claimed each a ſhare of approbation; but all applauſe was faint, to that beſtowed upon the effect of the portico, which by means of a ſtained-glaſs door thrown open, became part of the room: its fragrance "ſtole o'er the ſenſes like the ſweet ſouth upon a bed of violets," and every vivid hue that varies the beautiful boſom of Nature under a ſouthern ſun, peeped from the ſhading folds of a drapery hanging in careleſs feſtoons round the entrance; it did not however, either than the arrangement of the greenhouſe-plants, exclude a perſpective view of the country, equally wild, but far more intereſting than the ſubjects of Salvator's pencil.

"This is ſurely a fairy ſcene!" exclaimed Roſella, after a long interval of ſilence.

Miſs Beauclerc made no reply, for her admiration and content were too potent for ſpeech; but ſhe ſmiled at the emotions of her

her young companion, who continued to expreſs her aſtoniſhment.

"What inviſible being," ſaid ſhe, "has thus prepared every thing for our reception? Theſe flowers are newly placed here, and the plants, far from drooping for want of care, have not even a ſingle grain of duſt upon their leaves!"

Mr. Craufurd at this moment entered the room, begging leave to introduce to the lady of the manſion a Scotch laſſie, who was very ambitious of the honor of continuing at her poſt as drudge in ordinary, ſcowerer of kettles and pans, pig-feeder, faggot chopper, poultry-killer, hands and knees floor-ſcrubber, and had no ojection to take her turn at digging in the garden when neceſſary.

So many accompliſhments centering in one perſon were not to be overlooked, and Miſs Beauclerc very readily aſſented to the humble

humble petition of Menie Cameron, who was inſtalled into her ſervice in due form: but as Mr. Craufurd's wife was well acquainted with the extent of her abilities, ſhe had now, as it was uſual with her when her huſband left Dunkeld to examine the progreſs of the workmen at the cottage, taken the precaution to ſend a dinner with him, upon which the whole party made a tolerable meal.

Miſs Beauclerc then having written out a liſt of things that appeared immediately neceſſary to her eſtabliſhment, gave it to the obliging Maiſter Craufurd, and commiſſioned him to ſeek in Dunkeld for a lad whom ſhe could ſend thither whenever ſhe found occaſion. The gentleman promiſed the ſwifteſt compliance with her requeſts, and departed before the evening cloſed in, leaving the travellers in poſſeſſion of their new dwelling.

When

When he was gone, Miſs Beauclerc propoſed to Roſella to walk round her little domains, which was readily agreed to; and they rambled over a ſmall kitchen-garden, another encloſure dedicated to flowers and ſhrubs, and a young plantation of no great extent, but prettily laid out, and in good order. Mr. Craufurd had obviated the ſurpriſe this might have occaſioned, by informing the ladies that he had ſent for a young man from Edinburgh to take proper care of the pleaſure-ground; and as he happened to be acquainted with the gardener of a Nobleman's ſeat in the neighbourhood, he had bought the exotics at a ſmall expence, and placed them as the taſte of his more experienced friend directed.

Miſs Beauclerc and her companion proceeded through the eaſtern extremity of the grove they had admired from the cottage-windows, and coming immediately upon a hill beyond it, they endeavored to attain the ſummit before the ſun had wholly ſet, that

that they might better ſurvey the extent and features of the country.

"Roſella," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc, as ſhe leaned upon her arm, "you appear diſpirited: do you imagine that our retreat is too much ſecluded from the world? Yet I am much deceived if you have not too much taſte to regret quitting its noiſy pleaſures for ſuch a retirement as this. For myſelf, I can aver that in your ſociety I could not think any ſolitude irkſome; would but my Roſella cloſe my eyes with her wonted tenderneſs, and weep over my grave with filial affection, I could die in this ſpot, and never ſend a ſigh towards the tumultuous and giddy crowd upon whom I now turn my back."

Roſella could not but overlook the ſublimity of this declaration from the fondneſs which was mixed with it, and ſhe felt anew the remorſe ariſing from a ſecret conſciouſneſs of ingratitude, which whiſpered to her, that

that to add her implied cenſure with the indiſcriminating cry of the world againſt her friend, was cruel. She was unable to anſwer the enquiry of Miſs Beauclerc with the cheerfulneſs ſhe had intended, and burſting into tears, remained ſilent.

The good lady, not in the leaſt ſuſpecting the ſource of this emotion, concluded that Roſella regretted alone in the world, one individual, to whom ſhe was herſelf anxious to unite her; and in a ſhort ſentence tenderly chiding her tears, ſhe ſuffered them to ſubſide without further notice.

When they reached the ſummit of the hill, Roſella forgot her ſelf-reproaches in the ſcene that opened before her: a few paces from them was a fence that appeared like a park-paling, and a herd of deer darting in wild terror from a clump of trees at the approach of the intruders, confirmed the ſuppoſition. The encloſure was far from being a level broken only by gentle aſcents; on

on the contrary, it was interſperſed with abrupt and rude craggy rocks, the tops of which were thinly covered with ruſſet and heath in bloom; but the low land was more verdant, better wooded, and winded with the ſtream that bent its fickle courſe through the dale. In the bed of the river aroſe a building reſembling a tower, upon whoſe mouldering turrets ſome ravens waved at intervals their ſooty wings, and took flight for their more airy dwelling in the talleſt branches of the neighbouring trees.

"What can that place be meant for?" exclaimed Roſella, unwilling to avow that ſhe ſuſpected it to be a priſon. At the inſtant however that ſhe ſpoke, ſhe obſerved not a great way from the place, a modern pavilion, gay, light, and Grecian, but ill according with its ancient neighbour, which looked grim and ſullen upon the upſtart that obſcured its long ſtanding beauties.

"I ſhould like to know," reſumed ſhe, without waiting an anſwer to her firſt queſtion,

tion, "to whom this park and thoſe buildings belong."

"We will enquire," returned Miſs Beauclerc: "and if the family is abſent, moſt probably we may obtain leave of the houſekeeper to ſee the manſion, which is not far off, I ſuppoſe, and through her medium perhaps, have leave likewiſe to wander over theſe grounds whenever our inclination and their wild beauties may impel us to wiſh it."

Roſella did not much approve of theſe *wandering* plans; for though ſhe did not imagine the habitation could be much frequented by its owners, in ſo retired a ſpot, yet if Fortune ſhould ordain that any part of the family unexpectedly viſited it, and found Miſs Beauclerc and herſelf, or either ſeparately, in quiet poſſeſſion of the beſt ſitting-room in the houſe, or *wandering* extremely at their eaſe in the grounds, ſhe thought ſhe could not feel quite ſo *nonchalente* as a charming heroine ſhe had lately read of in an

an admired novel, who was ſurpriſed by the young unmarried owner of a magnificent Welch manſion, in which, by favour of Mrs. Houſekeeper, ſhe had liberty to *wander* to her heart's content, and then took advantage of a ſhower of rain to *feel compelled* to ſit down *tête-à-tête* with my Lord, to drink a comfortable diſh of tea, not forgetting however, to diſplay afterwards all the horror of the ſublimeſt delicacy, becauſe the daring youth was unfeeling enough to ſtumble againſt her ideas of decorum.

As Miſs Beauclerc and Roſella leaned againſt the paling, ſurveying with a parting look the ſcenery it encloſed, they heard diſtinctly the tremendous roar of the cataract Mr. Craufurd had mentioned; and as twilight ſtole over every object round them, they liſtened with an emotion not wholly unmixed with fear, and thought of their retreat with yet more ſatisfaction, as their imagination repreſented it as a place of ſafety and an aſylum.

CHAP. IV.

An ungracious houſekeeper at an old caſtle—a deciſive meeting.

NANCY having with ſome difficulty found a ſmall repoſitory of candles, ſupplied her Lady with lights on her return: for Menie had vaniſhed without any previous notice; and having been abſent more than an hour, occaſioned ſome alarm in the Northumbrian, who concluded that ſhe had been dragged down a precipice by ſome haggard witch, and that ſhe and her miſtreſs would never more get a glimpſe of the unlucky girl, excepting indeed in the unwelcome accoutrements of a winding-ſheet, saucer-eyes, and marble hands.

Murie

Menie returned however, in about an hour, and having on her entrance received a reprimand from Nancy, for giving her ſuch an alarm, ſhe ſaid ſhe had only been to the Laird's, to ſet Sawney's heart at reſt, by the information that her gude leddy wad not part wi her: an excuſe the other thought all-ſufficient.

The ſupper was quite a ruſtic one; but alas! it was ſerved up alſo in a moſt ruſtic ſtyle, but ill ſuited to the place in which it was eaten. Nancy, at the requeſt of her Lady, had undertaken the office of cook; and her ſkill was not entirely deſpicable, becauſe ſhe had more than once taken the poſt of honor by a kitchen fire; but it was not now diſplayed to much advantage, for want of implements and materials to exerciſe it upon. Mr. Craufurd had indeed promiſed to return early the next morning, with every thing that was moſt urgently wanted; and Miſs Beauclerc was obliged to wait with compoſure for the time, when the exquiſite

and well-managed meals of a cap-a-pié heroine ſhould grace her cottage table.

Roſella, in ſpite of the novelty of her ſituation—a novelty which appeared to have nothing unpleaſant in it, was far from being at eaſe: ſhe had heard the ingenuous reaſon aſſigned by Menie for her abſence, and feared this Laird, of whom ſhe ſpoke, might induce Miſs Beauclerc to drop her plan of total ſolitude, and furniſh thoſe enemies ſhe acknowledged to have, with freſh cauſe for cenſure and ſcandal.

After breakfaſt the following morning letters were to be written to Selina, to relieve her friendly heart with intelligence of their ſafety and their arrival, at the moſt lovely retirement in the world: and Roſella declining at that moment, the opportunity of addreſſing vows of everlaſting affection to Miſs Livia, and of giving her a glowing portrait of every ſhelf in the cottage, followed

lowed the advice of Miſs Beauclerc, and walked out for exerciſe.

As the way ſhe had taken the evening before was the only one with which ſhe was at all acquainted, ſhe purſued it again, and arrived at the park-paling without having encountered a ſingle being. The old building again preſenting its heavy ſides to her view, ſhe was deſirous to have a nearer ſight of it, and jumping over the fence, which was very low, advanced towards the river, but felt at every ſtep that ſhe was an interloper, and pictured to herſelf the Laird, ſuch a figure as ſhe had ſeen Wallace, the northern hero, deſcribed by a Scots painter, emerging from behind every buſh ſhe paſſed, to demand her buſineſs in his territories. And a figure did indeed accoſt her with a bow, but not ſo fierce looking a warrior.

This perſonage appeared like a game-keeper, and Roſella thought he looked like a South Briton. Feeling that ſome apology

was neceſſary for her intruſion, yet not knowing how to form one, ſhe ſaid, in a heſitating accent, that ſhe was a ſtranger to the place, but had not entered it with any ſiniſter deſign.

"Oh Miſs," replied the man, "my Lord does not wiſh nor deſire any perſon whatſoever, to be *diſcluded* from our park?"

He had grounded the fowling-piece which had been carried on his ſhoulder, as if he meant to hold a long converſation; and Roſella finding that he expected to be aſked a few queſtions, pointed to the manſion-houſe, which ſhe had juſt diſcovered from between the trees, and enquired who was the owner of it.

"My Lord, Miſs, as owns this onaccountable park as it's called—my Lord Morteyne," replied he.

Roſella

Roſella was vexed: "Lord Morteyne!" repeated ſhe to herſelf; "ſo, we are again his neighbours! Surely Miſs Beauclerc could not be acquainted with the circumſtance; if he ſhould happen to viſit this houſe whilſt we remain in the neighbourhood, he may ſuppoſe that we removed hither to attract his attention!"

This idea was ſo diſtreſſing, that ſhe had no longer any regret at having written to Mr. Mordaunt; and bidding the gamekeeper good morning, ſhe walked back to the cottage, which had now loſt every charm in her imagination, ſhe had originally allowed it to poſſeſs. That Miſs Beauclerc ſhould have ſo ſuddenly heard of a purchaſe thus ſingularly to ſuit her ideas, ſhe now thought a ſuſpicious circumſtance, and ſhe recollected even to have ſeen ſeveral letters from her fanciful friend addreſſed to that Mr. Mac-cloud, of whom his countryman Mr. Craufurd, had ſpoken.

She found that Miſs Beauclerc had not yet finiſhed her journaliſed epiſtle to her Selina, and as ſhe waited her leiſure to communicate the news ſhe had juſt heard, it occurred to her, that Mr. Mordaunt would moſt probably attend to her petition, before any *adventure* could poſſibly happen to make her rue this unlucky vicinity; and ſhe likewiſe confeſſed to herſelf, that as Miſs Beauclerc had actually concluded the purchaſe of the cottage, it could not be expected that ſhe would abandon it ſolely in complaiſance to her ſcruples.

Theſe reflections calmed the perturbation, with which ſhe had in the firſt moment, ſought to make her friend participate in her vexation: and Roſella had recovered ſufficient coolneſs before ſhe rejoined her, to mention her diſcovery without much emotion.

Miſs Beauclerc endeavored to hear it with ſymptoms of extreme ſurpriſe, and was ſo

ſo much occupied in acting her own part, that ſhe loſt the opportunity of learning from the undiſguiſed countenance and manner of her young companion, what effect this *accidental* and *unexpected* circumſtance had upon her mind. It had been very amply diſcuſſed in the journal juſt written to Selina, and much aſtoniſhment had been expreſſed that Lord Morteyne had not yet arrived, which had been fully expected from the *rencontre* at Luſs.

Roſella could not but perceive that her friend felt no diſpleaſure from what ſhe had heard, and auguring nothing good from the conjecture that followed, began to calculate how long it might be before Mr. Mordaunt received and anſwered her letter, when her reflections, and thoſe into which Miſs Beauclerc had fallen, were interrupted by the entrance of Nancy, who enquired if the young man who took care of the garden could be admitted to ſpeak to his Lady.

"Certainly, let him enter," replied the Padrona, ſtarting from her reverie; and a ſandy-haired, raw-boned, high-cheeked, thick-lipped, wide-mouthed, freckled, awkward Scotchman made his appearance, ſo unlike thoſe rural ſwains of comely mould, who falling in love with the heroine's ſimple but pretty waiting-damſel, form ſuch charming epiſodes in their hiſtories, that Miſs Beauclerc, entirely diſappointed, reſolved he ſhould not long remain in her ſervice, notwithſtanding his taſte in diſpoſing her flowers, and his evident care of her garden. Luckily however for poor Maclean, ſhe recollected whilſt he was making his bow, and expreſſing his hopes that ſhe was ſatisfied with his ſervices, that Nancy's arrangement might be made from the houſehold of Lord Morteyne, which would accommodate the difficulty in a very clever and uſeful manner—ſo that ſhe replied to his compliment with great condeſcenſion, and announced to him, that his good fortune was equal to that of Menie, in being retained through

through Mr. Craufurd's recommendation, and his own diligence.

She then enquired the name of a plant in the portico, with which both Roſella and herſelf were unacquainted, and learned that Maclean had heard, but forgotten it; but he promiſed to aſk his gude friend, my Lord's gardener, who had let him have it from the greenhouſe at Guairdy.

Miſs Beauclerc having demanded if he meant the adjoining houſe and park, received the expected affirmative, and aſked what eſtabliſhment his Lordſhip kept up there. He did not know exactly; but it had lately been increaſed, and every thing put in order, in expectation of the Lord's arrival: and it was ſaid his Lordſhip was come to Scotland after a young lady he was going to be married to, and the houſekeeper was in hopes he would bring his bride to Guairdy, for they had heard it was not very far from where the lady lived.

Miſs Beauclerc liſtened with the utmoſt eagerneſs to this recital, which might perhaps have cruſhed all her long cheriſhed hopes, had ſhe not been entirely convinced that the young lady thus mentioned was only—could only be Roſella. This reaſonable ſuppoſition compoſed a certain horror ſhe had involuntarily begun to feel; and finding that Maclean had nothing further to communicate, ſhe diſmiſſed him.

Roſella entertained no ſuch idea; and the news of Lord Morteyne's marriage reconciled her in part, to the *rencontre* ſhe imagined it almoſt impoſſible to avoid if he were to viſit the Park, as any known engagement to another woman would leſſen the ſuſpicions his family or himſelf might form, on ſeeing her tranſported, without any apparent cauſe or neceſſity, from Avelines to the environs of Guairdy.

When Maclean retired, Nancy entered with a very grave face, to enquire what was

to

to be done for victuals, as Mr. Craufurd had not ſent the eatables, he was commiſſioned to convey, by the lad he was to procure at Dunkeld.

Miſs Beauclerc was extremely ſhocked at ſo groſs a queſtion, applied too at ſuch a moment, and ſent the poor girl out of the room with a more ſerious air of anger than ſhe had ever before beheld on the countenance of her Lady. But alas! Roſella likewiſe, who was young and healthy, was ſo ſhamefully different from other heroines, that a walk generally gave her an inclination for dinner, and ſometimes even before the uſual hour. She had breakfaſted at eight, upon the tea and bread Mrs. Craufurd had furniſhed the houſe with, for the occaſional accommodation of her huſband, and it was now paſt two, ſo that ſhe very much commiſerated the diſtreſs of Nancy; and in ſpite of the charms of a cottage, ſituated amidſt the Grampian hills, near the winding Tay, ſhe had reaſon to think there were

likewiſe ſome attractives in a dinner, now that ſhe was in evident danger of paſſing a day without one. Yet Nancy's diſgrace prevented her from imparting ſuch degenerate ſentiments to her friend; and at about three o'clock the envoy arrived from Maiſter Craufurd, leading a packhorſe loaded to a height more than equal to his own, which was about that of a greyhound.

Menie ran out with great alacrity to help the beaſt in with his burthen, and almoſt deliberated whether ſhe ſhould not carry both the one and the other into the poultry yard. But Nancy meantime took a ſafer method, and equally expeditious, by unlading the poney as it deliberately marched forward; and having diſcovered where the proviſions were depoſited, ſhe drew forth the baſket that contained them, and fled to her rural kitchen with the ſpoil, calling to Menie to follow her without delay.

The

The dinner in about an hour and a half was ſerved up, at a time but ill ſuited to the ſimplicity of rural life; the other circumſtances attending it accorded better with what might be expected in humble dwellings: but Miſs Beauclerc had never read of a heroine being compelled to riſe from table to rince her own glaſſes, call for a napkin to wipe the duſt from her plate, or take up her ſalt with a table ſpoon; all this diſcompoſed her exceedingly, for ſuch a minutia had not even entered her head, when ſhe had devoured, in delighted admiration, thoſe ſcenes ſo often deſcribed, of charming young ladies retiring from the world, and taking up their abode at the cottage of ſome honeſt peaſant, whoſe infirm wife and awkward daughter form the whole train of domeſtics the lovely creature can boaſt of.

Miſs Beauclerc's preſent diſſatisfaction led her to reflect upon the innumerable dilemmas of thoſe matronly heroines, brought forward in the mournful pages of a Niobe-

like authoreſs, who invariably conducts them through a ſeries of lacrymalian adventures, with a priſon-gate in perſpective at the concluſion of them:—in the courſe of the hiſtory, the pathetic lady, followed by a train of half-a-dozen ſmall children, retires to the ſolitude of a cheap and remote cottage, or farm-houſe, attended by one ſervant girl, deſerted by her diſſipated and unfeeling huſband; ſhe is here ſought out by her adorer, who thinks himſelf happy in being admitted to play with the ſpirited boys, and fondle little Emma, ſo like mama! The fair ſuffering ſaint being uſually found extended upon a ſofa, weeping over the unlucky baby at her breaſt, and the attendant conſtantly employed in carrying out the other children, to exerciſe them, a taſk the girl has no objection to prolong as much as poſſible—how, thought Miſs Beauclerc, how in the name of the houſehold gods, can the myſteries of the *menage* be conducted! who waſhes, who duſts, who irons, who cleans, who mends, who cooks? No matter—

matter—if through the ignorance of a ruſtic wench, the lovely matron cannot avoid paſſing an hour in the preſence of her lover, and inviting him to ſtay dinner, an impaſſioned admirer will ſurely behold with an indulgent eye, the ſtirrup in her petticoat, and eat with an exquiſite reliſh, in her divine preſence, haſhed mutton burnt in the pot, or a ſmoaked beef ſteak.

Miſs Beauclerc, who had expected in her cottage the pleaſant refinements of that affluence to which ſhe had been accuſtomed, began to regret the loſs of Simpſon, whoſe diligence and attention to her convenience would at this moment have been ſo acceptable; and ſhe mentioned an intention of writing as ſhe had promiſed, to direct him where to ſeek her—an intention very grateful to Roſella, who had often repreſented to herſelf the old man's uneaſineſs at being abandoned ſo ſuddenly; and ſhe had even feared that his anxiety, and reſentment at ſo ſtrange a return for his long ſervices might

might be fatal to him: on his account ſhe did not regret the ſtubborn ſtupidity of poor Menie, nor the ruſticity of Nancy.

The boy who had led the horſe from Dunkeld, related the ſeveral diſaſters which had ſo much retarded his appearance. He had gone only a mile, before the ſtrap that faſtened the paniers, gave way, and when he buckled it a little tighter, it broke, and he was obliged to get it mended as well as he could; and then he was directed to the factor's new houſe inſtead of the right one, and in turning into the road to Guairdy again, he had had to lead the beaſt up a hill ſo ſteep, that when he got to the top, he was near lying down with want of breath, ſo the guide was obliged to let him crop a little graſs to hearten him.

Roſella thought that ſo many combining circumſtances might well excuſe the tardineſs which had chagrined ſome of the faſting party, and would not ſuffer the weary poney

poney to return to Dunkeld that night, even at the hazard of waiting for the dinner again on the following day: an effort of humanity Miſs Beauclerc readily concurred in, becauſe, independent of her natural compaſſion, a thatched-roofed heroine ſhould be the moſt commiſerating and tender-hearted of the pitying ſex. The next morning therefore by daylight the boy returned with a note to Mr. Craufurd, entruſting him with further commiſſions, and deſiring that he would enquire at the poſt-office for letters Miſs Beauclerc expected.

Roſella could not yet hope a reply to her's; but this method of ſending, inſpired her with the idea of being enabled to procure it unknown to her companion, by making a practice of inſpecting the load the carrier was charged with, the moment it arrived.

After breakfaſt, Miſs Beauclerc propoſed walking to Guairdy Park, and Roſella reluctantly

luctantly complied: ſhe little imagined however, that her complaiſance had drawn her in to accompany her friend in a projected ſurvey of the houſe; but ſhe found that Miſs Beauclerc was reſolved not to return to her cottage without it. Notwithſtanding the approaching marriage of Lord Morteyne, Roſella felt a few ſcruples in *wandering* over his dwelling, prepared as ſhe underſtood it was, for his reception. But Miſs Beauclerc chid her for her folly, and deſired her to lay aſide childiſh prejudices, and truſt to her guidance.

She was far from willing to confeſs all the repugnance ſhe experienced in doing ſo; and ſilently followed her flighty friend, who having called upon a labourer ſhe happened to meet, to conduct her, after ſome difficulty procured a ſight of the houſekeeper, and with an air of marked condeſcenſion, ſuch as ſhe judged it a point of heroic etiquette to aſſume, ſhe announced her

her wiſh of being conducted through the apartments.

The perſonage thus accoſted had been firſt *femme-de-chambre* to the Dowager Lady Morteyne, and at her death had ſolicited to be retained in the family, hoping to be placed about the perſon of Lady Lucy: but unfortunately, though ſhe had poſſeſſed the confidence of her deceaſed Lady, and had been extremely uſeful to her, ſhe was known to have a temper ſo uncommonly acrimonious, that the houſehold which had the evil fortune to contain her, was uſually changed *au haut en bas* at leaſt once in a fortnight. Lady Lucy not knowing how to deny her requeſt, yet totally averſe to having ſuch a ſcourge amongſt her domeſtics, perſuaded her brother to ſend her to Guairdy in her preſent capacity. But retirement, which was on the part of Mrs. Tadpole entirely unwiſhed for, had not in the leaſt ſucceeded in correcting her foibles,

or

or making her more indulgent to thoſe of others.

She had heard of the new comers at the houſe called the cottage, and concluded, from the expence and folly it exhibited ſo many ſymptoms of, that the ladies were nothing but kept madams, who were either ſent there by her Lord, or came to draw him in, becauſe they had heard in London that he was going to Guairdy; ſo that inſtead of the charming old dame ſo repeatedly deſcribed in Miſs Beauclerc's ſtudies, who good-naturedly conducts people through the deſerted apartments of the manſion, and tells in confidence all the ſecret and bloody tranſactions which had happened in them ſome twenty or thirty years back, ſhe beheld a moſt forbidding-looking fury, caſt in the true Zantippean mould—a curved ſpine, a ſharp bony elbow, deſcending on one ſide half a foot below the protuberant hip, a thin long noſe deeply colored at the tip, red hair, and eyes nearly of the

ſame

ſame hue, whoſe beams far from being lambent, ſhot a fierce ſparkling light, and ſeemed to the imagination, to crackle and hiſs like the fire of a blackſmith's forge: her mouth was like a deſerted cemetery, which yawning upon the horror-ſtruck obſerver, diſplayed a variety of diſcolored bones ſcattered in rude confuſion, and mouldering in their dark aſylum: her hand might have been lectured upon by an anatomiſt without the trouble of diſplacing the ſkin, and the fingers were ſo long and meagre, that they looked like the claw of an immenſe bird.

Miſs Beauclerc waited almoſt five minutes for a reply to her requeſt, whilſt Roſella ſhrunk from the coming anſwer, as a poor traveller ſhrinks from an eruption of Mount Veſuvius which he finds himſelf unable to eſcape.

Mrs. Houſekeeper was, in the interim, endeavoring to collect in one furious ſentence,

tence, the wrath and indignation which for a moment had overpowered every faculty.

"You wants both of you to ſee the houſe!" ſhe ſcreamed, in a voice that was at once both baſs and treble, tenor and counter-tenor, "ho, you wants to ſee the houſe!! and you wants other people to ſee your gew-gaw ſhow-box, as you have tricked up there; but you may go back to your dog-holes in London, and try to trap your fools there—there's none here as wouldn't turn up their noſes at ſuch trumpery! See the houſe quotha! and who'd be the ſimpleton to trundle after your draggle tails to ſhow it you?"

"For God's ſake," whiſpered Roſella, "let us go away!"

"See the houſe! you'll ſee the houſe of correction firſt—my Lord's not for ſuch as you—he's going to be married to an honeſt body, one as brings honor and money, and won't bring him to want and ſhame. See the houſe!!!" raiſing her tone to

to the higheſt pitch her voice would carry, "go ſee how they beats hemp, you young huſſy! And you, miſtreſs, don't think to come over your honeſt betters, with your mincing and ſimpering, to gain your wicked ends—what, you wants to ſee the houſe, do you?"

Roſella, expecting every moment to feel the claws of the termagant fixed in her eyes, was now ſo governed by ſhame and terror, that ſhe ran off with uncommon ſwiftneſs, and darting through a court-yard, ſoon gained the park without ſlackening her pace; and even then, was ſtill ſo much under the impreſſion of the antipathy and horror the beldame had inſpired, that ſhe flew over hill and dale in her way home, with the wildneſs of a maniac.

And now, the deſtiny of a heroine hovered over her: ſhe was not fated to reach that home without an adventure; for in five minutes ſhe was ſurrounded or rather en-

cloſed on every ſide by horſemen of every deſcription, and carriages of every denomination. Her recollection ſuddenly returned, and with it the unſpeakable confuſion of finding herſelf an object of curioſity, of compaſſion, of laughter, of ridicule, or diverſion, as in different boſoms different opinions reſpecting her prevailed.

Roſella juſtly imagined this cavalcade to be the bridal train of Lady Morteyne, and would have given the univerſe to have eſcaped from further notice: independently of mortification, ſhe felt extreme inconvenience from the difficulty of regaining her breath, which her running had made her loſe, and from a dryneſs in the throat and mouth that almoſt threatened ſuffocation; ſhe leaned againſt a tree, preſſing her hand to her boſom with an energy indicative of great diſtreſs, which her countenance fully corroborated, when the voice of Lady Lucy Eſtcourt ſaluted her ear, whoſe accents ſpoke commiſeration.

Roſella

Roſella looked up, and perceived her endeavoring to deſcend from her carriage; but Lord Morteyne oppoſed her intention, not only by whiſpered diſſuaſions, but by detaining her almoſt forcibly. Roſella could not attend to the iſſue of the conteſt, for the ſight of Mr. Povey, who was laughing violently, and recounting ſome circumſtance in which he often introduced her name, engaged, the next moment, all her attention: ſhe could only diſtinguiſh however, the unconnected phraſes—Iriſh fortune-hunter—diſappeared from Edinburgh—recognized the lady at Dumbarton—curſed airs—fomented a damned ſcuffle—deſerted in her turn.

"Good God!" thought ſhe, "my application to Mr. Mordaunt is then too late; my reputation is gone, and Miſs Beauclerc's friendſhip has undone me! Let me not however, ſtay here to witneſs ſuch ſcorn!"

Swift as thought, ſhe again darted forward, and unpurſued, reached the boundaries of the park, which ſhe reſolved never more to enter; and then, with a leſs haſty pace, returned to the cottage, forlorn, humiliated, ſick of her exiſtence, and fully reſolved to hide her head where the cruel ſurmiſes of the world could never reach her.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Mama tears away the myſterious veil thrown over the affinity between herſelf and her daughter.

SHE had waited above an hour for the appearance of Miſs Beauclerc, and was much alarmed at her prolonged abſence: not ſo much from the dread of any accident having befallen her, of which ſhe did not think there was much probability, as from a horror of her betraying herſelf to the ridicule of the large party ſhe had herſelf juſt eſcaped from, by exhibiting the peculiarity of her ſentiments and expectations.

The anxious reflections of Roſella were interrupted at this period by Nancy, who

ran in, ſaying that a ſtrange gentleman wanted to ſpeak to her. The idea of Mr. Mordaunt inſtantly occurred, and ſhe flew towards the door in a tranſport of delight, in the hope of being relieved from her diſtreſs by his friendly advice and interference, and reſcued from reproach. It was not however Mr. Mordaunt who waited admittance, but Mr. Delamere; and Roſella, who had actually ſpread out her arms to welcome him, in the firſt emotion of her ſatisfaction, ſtood confounded and immoveable when ſhe diſcovered her error.

"I am ſorry, Madam," ſaid the gentleman, "that my negligence of etiquette in not ſending in my name, ſhould have occaſioned a miſtake of perſon, which ſeems ſo much to chagrin you."

She had before felt awkward and abaſhed, and now loſing all compoſure and preſence of mind, ſunk into a ſeat, near which ſhe ſtood,

ſtood, and burſting into an agony of tears, laid her head upon the arm of a ſofa, and ſobbed violently.

Whatever the ſentiments of Mr. Delamere might be as to her conduct and principles, he was ſhocked at ſo ſtrong an expreſſion of anguiſh, and endeavored to conſole her, by obſerving that her peace of mind was yet retrievable, if ſhe would accept the advice and aſſiſtance of a lady, who had commiſſioned him to enquire if ſhe were indeed willing to receive the moſt eſſential ſervices.

"Tell me," ſuddenly interrupted Roſella, her tears for a moment ceaſing, "if you received a letter, or rather an encloſure, I addreſſed to you, at Eideva Lodge? If you have not, you may think you acquired a right to diſtreſs me thus, from the cruel miſtake I had not time to rectify when you left Warkworth ſo ſuddenly; did you receive that letter?"

"Certainly not," replied he.

"Then you have thought to this hour," purſued Roſella eagerly, "that I was abject enough to ſolicit your bounty, when I was anxious only to procure the loan of good offices, in a moment of embarraſſment to which my inexperience was unequal. Even that indeed was a liberty for which I have your pardon to entreat; and I muſt further beg you will wait the return of Miſs Beauclerc, who will reſtore the twenty pounds you left in my hands. I encloſed it inſtantly in a cover, and ſent it by the poſt to the houſe of Mr. Mompeſſon; but I ſuppoſe it is loſt."

"I will not aſk your forgiveneſs," ſaid Mr. Delamere, "for a miſtake which reflected no diſcredit upon you: for poverty, my dear Miſs Montreſor, is an accidental evil, not a reproach; but imprudence and error perſiſted in——Let me inform you, however, that I am now deputed by Lady Lucy Eſtcourt, who wiſhes to learn if ſhe can aſſiſt you in any way that may tend to extri-

cate

cate you from ſituations, in which a mind ſo ingenuous, and a heart ſo feeling as your's, muſt be ill at eaſe. Lady Lucy is the beſt and moſt generous of her ſex, and has ſuffered much from ſeeing you this morning ſo greatly diſtreſſed; and ſhe thinks your appearance here is not calculated to remove unpleaſant ſurmiſes, but may be productive of inſult and impertinence, which, believe me, you will find it hard to bear."

"It is this inſult, this impertinence, that I cannot endure!" exclaimed Roſella, flying out of the room, and haſtening to her chamber, where ſhe locked herſelf in; and indulging her tears, conſoled herſelf with the reflection that remonſtrance and repreſentation which wounded her pride, and outraged her delicacy, could not then reach her ear.

After ſome time her diſtreſs rather abated, and ſhe diſtinguiſhed the voice of the lad returned from Dunkeld: the expected letter was now more than ever deſirable, and ſhe

ran down to examine thoſe he might bring; but not one appeared in her addreſs. Amidſt thoſe of Miſs Beauclerc however, ſhe diſcovered the writing of Mr. Ellinger, and had little doubt but that he had been prompted by Mr. Mordaunt to deſire her return.

Whilſt ſhe held the letters in her hand, ſecretly commenting on the probable contents of that from her guardian, ſhe learned from Nancy that Miſs Beauclerc was in the muſic-room, and had been there above half an hour, and ſhe ran to her, and preſented the packet.

The countenance of Miſs Beauclerc changed whilſt ſhe tore open the epiſtle of her Chancery-Lane correſpondent, and the unuſual paleneſs of her cheeks increaſed, when ſhe read the mandate that was meant to ſnatch Roſella from her.

" Let

"Let him," exclaimed ſhe, in violent emotion, "exert the power I fooliſhly entruſted him with, and I will likewiſe aſſert mine!—Roſella," added ſhe, "my poor deſerted Roſella, the malicious cruelty of the unfeeling world but renders you more dear to me; know then, ſweet ſolace of my widowed heart, that I am—thy mother! Nor can the dying requeſt of thy murdered father now enforce a longer obedience, when my enemies have nearly ſucceeded in their barbarous endeavors to ſeparate us!"

Roſella was almoſt convinced from this rhapſody, and the wild air with which it was uttered, that the intellects of her luckleſs friend were deranged, and exerted herſelf to ſooth her riſing frenzy.

"Deareſt Miſs Beauclerc," replied ſhe, "let us return to Avelines; and there if you wiſh for my ſociety, I am ſure Mr. Ellinger will not deny it at our joint requeſt: there you are known and reſpected, and

there we ſhall live in peace, indifferent to the injuſtice of the world."

"Angelic creature!" exclaimed the matron, "is it thus you retort the inſolent triumph of that ungrateful man? I will further fortify your deteſtation, by informing you, that your dear unhappy father loſt his life by the diſhonorable co-operation of a part of this man's family, with a league of villains, who ſtripped him of his fortune, and then drove him by the baſeſt inſults to deſpair and death. Short and embittered was the happineſs my union with him afforded; he was too ſoon torn from my arms, and more than expiated his imprudence by his untimely fate!"

"Good Heavens!" thought Roſella, "what will become of me! How ſhall I pacify her violence, and prevent thoſe dreadful wanderings?"

"Dear Madam," continued ſhe audibly, "Mr. Delamere did not appear, as you imagine, to triumph; on the contrary, he merely

merely called, at Lady Lucy's requeſt, to aſſure me of her good-will."

"Her good-will," retorted Miſs Beauclerc, every feature beaming indignation, "what perfidious inſolence! When I have learned that ſhe is particularly delighted with her unworthy brother's alliance, and that the woman he has married is her moſt intimate friend."

"Surely," ſaid Roſella, in a perſuaſive tone, "the marriage of Lord Morteyne is of no importance to me!"

"You are right, my child," replied Miſs Beauclerc, who appeared ſtruck by her manner, "it ſhould not be of any: I am charmed with the dignity of mind you diſplay; and when," ſhe added, in an heroic voice, "your gentle heart has quite forgot the ingrate who could ſlight thoſe modeſt beauties, the paſſion of the worthy Oberne will I hope be encouraged."

"Mr. Oberne!" ſaid Roſella coloring; "I dare ſay he no longer remembered me when a few miles had parted us!"

Miſs

Miſs Beauclerc, on hearing this ſuppoſition, ſo far forgot the outrageous injuries ſhe had juſt diſcovered, as to ſmile.

"My Roſella," exclaimed ſhe, ſuddenly recollecting herſelf, "you have not yet given me the ſweet title of mother!—Come to my arms, my daughter, and, as ſuch, embrace your only parent!"

At this tender invitation the follies which had coſt Roſella ſo dear, faded on her memory: ſhe ſtill thought her friend's mind diſordered, but that affection for her ſhould be predominant when reaſon had almoſt fled, touched her ſoul.

"Dear Miſs Beauclerc," ſaid ſhe, "you have ever diſplayed to me the kindneſs of a mother, and as ſuch I muſt always regard you; let us only return to England, and then I may obtain the permiſſion of Mr. Ellinger to remain with you; but againſt his

his injunctions, you are ſenſible I ſhould not have the power to act as I wiſh."

"Have I not told you," replied the matronly heroine, with an air bordering on diſpleaſure, "that you are my child? and do you heſitate, Roſella, to comply with my wiſhes, becauſe they are oppoſed by the unnatural commands of a ſtranger? Unfortunate that I am!" continued ſhe, burſting into tears; "did but my beloved daughter regard me with half the tenderneſs I bear her, ſhe would fly from any authority, that was exerted to tear her from the lacerated boſom of her widowed mother!"

The diſtreſs, real and fictitious, of Miſs Beauclerc had now worked to ſuch a pitch of uncontroulable emotion, that Roſella was ſtaggered in the diſbelief of her ſtrange aſſertion; her mind was become the ſeat of confuſion, of anxiety, and terror, and all ſhe could now do was to careſs her ſobbing friend, and aſſure her of the moſt unlimitted affection.

"I believe

"I believe you," interrupted ſhe; "promiſe me then, my child, that you will never deſert your mother: but if the man, entruſted with the guardianſhip of the ſmall ſum I ſecured to you in your infancy, ſhould claim you as his ward, I exact of your duty and love, that you will eſcape with me to ſome retreat, where his power cannot reach us!"

Roſella ſtarted at this wild propoſal, and ſhrunk aghaſt from binding herſelf to perform ſo raſh and imprudent an action: but the fear of increaſing the imagined frenzy of Miſs Beauclerc withheld her refuſal, and ſhe heſitated, ſtammered, changed color, yet no promiſe paſſed her lips.

"Am I deceived?" cried the widowed heroine. "Is your heart ſo wedded to the perfidious Morteyne, that you cannot determine to relinquiſh the ſight of him, even devoted to another?"

"What

"What an idea!" exclaimed Roſella, with a bluſh of anger and indignation: "for Heaven's ſake, Madam, do not mortify me in this cruel manner! Have I diſplayed ſo much forwardneſs towards Lord Morteyne, or any other man, that you ſhould for a moment think ſo ill of me?"

"Why then," reſumed Miſs Beauclerc, affecting an air of gentle compaſſion, "why not give me the promiſe I aſk?"

"What analogy can there be," ſaid Roſella in amazement, "between Lord Morteyne and any engagement I may enter into with you?"

Miſs Beauclerc ſeeing her offended, and not having any reply ready for this enquiry, deſired that the ſubject might be waved until ſhe had read her Selina's packet, to which Roſella aſſented in ſilence: and whilſt her ſtrange friend hurried through a lecture of eight pages, cloſely written, ſhe was confirmed in the opinion ſhe had already formed, that Mrs. Ellinger was the ſecret

ſpring

ſpring of thoſe abſurdities, which in Miſs Beauclerc had given her ſo much anxiety and embarraſſment.

The contents of this important packet were, as uſual, kept a profound ſecret; and as the peruſal of it laſted until the dinner was upon the table, the ſubject *in petto* was of courſe not immediately renewed.

This meal was as unhappily conducted as the preceding ones, and Miſs Beauclerc becoming impatient and out of temper at ſuch terrible indecorum, accuſed Nancy of awkwardneſs, and threatened to diſcharge Menie. During this diſcompoſure, ſhe undeſignedly diſcovered to Roſella, that Simpſon had returned to London, and having demanded his diſmiſſion of Mr. Ellinger, who was ſteward in the abſence of his Lady, had retired into his native county, exceedingly diſſatisfied with her conduct.

The

The method by which Mr. Mordaunt had arrived at the knowledge of their unlucky adventures, inſtantly occurred to Roſella: yet ſhe could not account for his having heard the detail of their meeting with Oberne, till ſhe ſurmiſed that it muſt have reached Simpſon through the correſpondence of Mrs. Nancy with her aunt, which had begun before they left Edinburgh. She was not diſpleaſed to unravel the myſtery of the ſecret enemy Miſs Beauclerc had complained of—an idea that had conſtantly been accompanied by acute uneaſineſs; yet ſhe grieved to have parted entirely from the poor old butler, with an impreſſion left upon his mind of her unkindneſs and negligence.

After dinner, Miſs Beauclerc was ſilent and thoughtful; and ſeemed, Roſella feared, to be revolving in her mind ſome new whim. At length turning ſuddenly towards her—

"You

"You mentioned," ſaid ſhe, "the name of Delamere, and joined it to that of Lady Lucy—he is now at Guairdy, I can well imagine; tell me, Roſella, did he come hither to inſult you with his perfidy, and to diſplay the double ſucceſs of her wiles? For my poor Selina has heard, with the utmoſt indignation at ſuch baſeneſs, that he is ſhortly to be united to that artful woman, Morteyne's ſiſter. Good God! that men will thus "on a fair mountain leave to feed, and batten on a moor!"

Roſella, who fancied ſhe ſaw returning frenzy in the eye of her friend, would not contradict her too peremptorily; yet ſhe could not endure to hear Lady Lucy Eſtcourt branded thus with baſeneſs and art, or Mr. Delamere ſo vindictively charged with perfidy towards her, without wiſhing to confute an accuſation ſo entirely unjuſt.

"Mr. Delamere, Madam," ſaid ſhe, "has not ſurely given me cauſe to ſpeak thus

thus of him! I can at moſt have merely reaſon to be vexed that he believes too readily thoſe calumnies which perhaps my own imprudence may have pointed. Towards Lady Lucy, it would be in me the height of impertinence to apply to her ſuch terms as thoſe you have uſed, ſince what I have conſtantly heard of her character and diſpoſition, and the little I have had an opportunity of obſerving, have diſplayed them not only as unoffending, but extremely amiable. Yet I am convinced, dear Madam, that the warmth of your cenſure proceeds from your too great partiality for me; but I am hurt that it ſhould lead you to commit even in thought, the leaſt injuſtice."

Miſs Beauclerc raiſed her hands in admiration, and apoſtrophiſed her as a patient, diſpaſſionate, much-injured angel, enthuſiaſtically extolling her for pleading the merits of people who deſerved only her reſentment.

"In

"In what reſpect, Madam?" aſked Roſella.

"Did not Delamere," returned ſhe, "diſplay at Sedgfield, a very particular admiration of you?"

"Not to my obſervation," ſaid Roſella, very much vexed: "yet even if the circumſtances of the moment, and want of other amuſement had induced him to pay me a few compliments, and I had been ſilly enough to think them of more importance than they were meant to be, ſurely the manner in which we quitted him, after an intercourſe of apparent good-will, might juſtify on his ſide any change of ſentiments, and leave me little reaſon to complain, if Mr. Delamere now chuſes to offer a juſt tribute of admiration to the merits of any worthy woman, whoſe ſituation, family, fortune, and character may be exactly all he wiſhes."

"A man muſt be a ſordid wretch," exclaimed Miſs Beauclerc, "if in ſeeking a

wife, he conſiders ſituation, family, and fortune!"

Roſella, who ſaw all the ardor of romance and ſentiment ſparkle in her eyes, was ſilent; for ſhe had before heard her friend declare, that a man who could attach himſelf ſo prudently, muſt inevitably be a very cool lover: indeed a lover ſuch as Miſs Beauclerc, in the courſe of her lectures, had ſo often met with, who without any reaſonable cauſe flies to ſome remote village, and there never fails to encounter, in his rambles, an incognita of penſive mien and doubtful character, whom, in defiance of common caution, and repeated warnings, he adores through thick and thin—was the lover ſhe could alone allow to wear the myrtle. But the argument Roſella had uſed ſhe felt the force of, though ſhe was unwilling to own it; nay, ſhe even began to think that there are very few lovers whoſe cannon-proof conſtancy might be ſo far relied upon, after enduring

enduring three or four ſuch freaks, as even to give hope of a return of allegiance.

Fortunately this ſubject at preſent ſo wholly occupied her, that ſhe forgot to renew her enquiry of the converſation that had paſſed when Mr. Delamere had viſited the cottage, or again to urge the topic which had been waved before dinner. The afternoon was employed as uſual, when any thing important had happened, in writing to Selina; and Roſella very ſoberly ſat down to work—a vulgarity a heroine is ſcarcely ever caught at, her elegant and ſimple wardrobe being compoſed of ſuch ſublime materials as never to require alteration or repair.

The mind of Roſella was not however, ſo peaceful as her employment ſeemed to indicate: ſhe thought much of the injury her fame had ſuſtained from her fatal journey —an injury ſhe was doubtful if even the advice and friendſhip of Mr. Mordaunt could

efface; and her imagination dwelt too, in ſpite of her incredulity, upon the ſtrange affirmation of Miſs Beauclerc, that ſhe was her daughter.

"Should it be ſo!" thought Roſella; "but no, it is impoſſible! It could not have been preſerved ſo long a ſecret from the world: Mr. Ellinger muſt know it, and Mr. Mordaunt. Surely they would have informed me of ſo important a circumſtance —my unhappy friend *muſt* be diſordered in her intellects; yet if I am indeed her daughter!—if for my ſake ſhe has refuſed more than one eligible alliance, and as ſhe ſays, lives but for me, ought I not to endure for her, the mortification which the opinions of ſome cenſorious people might give me, and perform my duty without ſhrinking? But Mr. Mordaunt will decide for me—I will be guided by his judgment, and his friendſhip; and I think he will not neglect me, at leaſt I will hope not."

Miſs Beauclerc, who was writing during this ſoliloquy, with the energy which enthuſiaſm uſually gave her pen, ſuddenly threw her letter aſide—

"Yes," exclaimed ſhe, "I will wring the ſelfiſh ſoul of this unfeeling man, and make him groan with remorſe, amidſt his bridal revels!"

"My God, what now!" whiſpered Roſella, turning pale with apprehenſion; "Oh that I were an hundred miles from this place!"

"My child," continued the ſage matron, "all gentle as you are, and unwilling to inflict puniſhment for the wrongs you endure, tell me what even you will allow that monſter to deſerve, whoſe family having contributed to make an orphan of a lovely innocent young creature, he can, without remorſe, have the barbarity to gain her guileleſs heart, and then not only leave her to ſcorn and deriſion, but deprive her of another lover, whoſe merits and attachment might have effaced all her ſorrows?"

"Indeed,

"Indeed, Madam, I cannot at all decide," replied Roſella; "becauſe I never had a lover, and cannot aſcertain how far a lady may be affected by the loſs of one."

A heroine without a lover! Roſella without an adorer!—The idea was not to be endured.

"Yes, my dear," ſaid the lady eagerly, "you have lovers, but they are unworthy of you!"

"Well then," replied Roſella, endeavoring to ſmile, "we will not, dear Madam, make them of importance to us, if they are unworthy: let us think no more of them."

"I admire your fortitude," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc, "and I will imitate it. I muſt however, once more ſee this worldly-minded Morteyne, for I have a pecuniary affair to ſettle with him, which I will not delay: and though," continued ſhe with ardor, "by paying him the ſum mentioned in his

uncle's nefarious bond, I ſhould be reduced to beggary, with you, my Roſella, I would rather wander from door to door than not part with it."

Roſella was much terrified by her vehemence—

"Deareſt Madam," ſaid ſhe, taking her hand, "condeſcend this once to liſten to me. If you have any buſineſs to tranſact with Lord Morteyne, let Mr. Ellinger or Mr. Mordaunt ſettle it: you can give them your directions."

"Mr. Ellinger," interrupted Miſs Beauclerc, "has already ſettled it, but not to my ſatisfaction; and this once at leaſt, I will purſue my own unſhackled will."

She then reſumed her pen, and as Roſella could not forbear obſerving, addreſſed Lord Morteyne, with a formal requeſt to have the honor of half an hour's converſation at her cottage on the next day.

As

As ſhe was folding the billet, Roſella, unable to endure her apprehenſions of the reſult, threw herſelf on her knees, and entreated that the affair might reſt a few days longer; but her ſolicitations were effectually checked by her friend's reply.

"No, my child," returned ſhe, with a dignified air, "your fond efforts to ſcreen this ingrate from pangs he well merits, ſhall not avail him; therefore urge me no more."

And almoſt inſtantly, ſhe deſired Nancy to give the note to Maclean, who was to proceed with it immediately to Guairdy.

Roſella burſting into tears of mortification and anguiſh, left the room, and retreated to her chamber; but Miſs Beauclerc was not, on this occaſion, to be moved from her purpoſe by the diſtreſs ſhe exhibited, and Roſella ſaw Maclean, from her window, take the way to the park. She re-

preſented to herſelf Lord Morteyne obtruded upon at his dinner table, by the unlucky note; for Miſs Beauclerc had ſtrictly charged her meſſenger not to return without an anſwer, conceiving in the ardor of her ſublime revenge, that the common uſages of the world, etiquette, and good manners, muſt all give way before more conſequential concerns; and certainly, like many other woe-worn heroines, ſhe thought her imaginary wrongs of the higheſt import.

Roſella pictured to her fancy the contemptuous anger of Lord Morteyne; ſhe ſaw the unfortunate ſcroll thrown from one to another, accompanied by burſts of ridicule, and the ſneers of malice: ſhe recollected the impertinence of the reptile Povey, and ſhe had experienced the inſolence of Mr. Eſtcourt; but in this mortifying ſcene, her candour brought forward the compaſſionate interference of his amiable ſiſter, and the moderation of Delamere:—ſhe now wiſhed

that

that ſhe had had more command over her feelings, and received the well-meant offer of Lady Lucy in a different manner.

Her perturbation became extreme, and ſhe even meditated to avoid the mortifications that appeared to await her, by walking to Dunkeld, and returning to England by the aid of that advice and aſſiſtance ſhe had in the morning rejected. This thought was however, only the momentary effervescence of ſuffering pride and wounded delicacy: but though ſhe rejected the idea of leaving Miſs Beauclerc in a clandeſtine manner, ſhe ſtill propoſed to herſelf to pretend that ſhe had ſome purchaſes to make at Dunkeld, and entreat her friend to permit her to walk thither the next day, attended by Maclean; and thus ſhe thought to eſcape the horror of ſeeing Lord Morteyne, ſhould he think proper to attend the ſummons he would receive.

CHAP. VI.

The elegance of the cottage ſullied by ignorant ruſticity—a captive hero reduced to deſpair.

ROSELLA having in ſome degree compoſed herſelf, at length rejoined Miſs Beauclerc, who was waiting with extreme impatience the return of her envoy; but though the diſtance to the great houſe was little more than a mile and a half, Maclean had not completed his commiſſion in three hours;—indeed, to do him juſtice, it would have been impoſſible to liſten to the hiſtories poured into his ear by the third table gentry, and in return, ſuffer others ſcarcely leſs inſtructive to be extracted from him, in a ſhorter time.

Nancy

Nancy at laſt entered to announce his return.

"Where is the note," aſked Miſs Beauclerc impatiently, "the letter, the reply?"

Nancy diſappeared to fetch it; but brought it at the tip of her tongue.

"Maclean ſays, Ma'am, that Mr. Johnſon, the gentleman, he ſays, his Lord ſays, his Lord is ſorry to ſend a—a verdant anſwer to your noate; but the reaſon is, his Lord is a drinking his wind—but howſever, he'll make it up to-morrow by coming to ſee you."

Nancy having now performed her part, by giving the *coup de grace* to this mutilated meſſage, retired to purſue the enquiries ſhe had already begun of Maclean, concerning the proceedings of the grand people at the Park: and Miſs Beauclerc, burſting with indignation, exclaimed to Roſella—

"I expected this, and am not ſurpriſed; I was prepared for ſuch behaviour, by the treatment I received this morning. That horrid woman, who was tutored I ſuppoſe to inſult us, had not finiſhed her peal of abuſe, when a ſervant rode up to the houſe, to announce the approach of his Lord and Lady. I was rather ſurpriſed, as you may well imagine, to hear him ſpeak of his Lady; but concluded, after a moment of reflection, that the man meant Lady Lucy, and I reſolved to ſee her before I returned home, that ſhe might learn the outrageous inſolence of her domeſtic. The abuſive creature haſtily retreated, muttering her diſcontent that ſhe had not received any previous notice; and I waited ſome time before the carriages drew up to the door. When I diſcerned Lady Lucy, I inſtantly advanced to her, and repreſenting what the conduct of the houſekeeper had been, deſired her immediate diſmiſſion; but Lady Lucy, with an air of confuſion, the conſciouſneſs of her too ſucceſsful arts might well

well give her, replied that ſhe was only a gueſt at Guairdy, but ſhe had little doubt her ſiſter, Lady Morteyne, would diſcourage any improper conduct in her ſervants.

" The ſuſpicions I had before repelled as totally impoſſible, were by this ſpeech confirmed beyond a doubt; and certainly my indignation muſt have been very apparent. I turned, with all the contempt I really felt, towards a young woman who had deſcended from another carriage, and was hanging upon the arm of the vile Morteyne, in an affected emotion of fear and diſtreſs; when this ſhameleſs man advancing to me, ſaid, with the moſt undaunted aſſurance—

'Lady Morteyne, Madam, is at preſent fatigued with her journey, and will be engaged in welcoming her gueſts; at any other time ſhe would attend to your complaints without heſitation—at preſent you muſt excuſe her.'

" With an air of defiance he then paſſed me, leading the woman into the houſe, and calling to Lady Lucy to follow him. I

believe I ſhould have ſunk with the various agitations that oppreſſed me, had not that artful creature pretended great feeling, and called to a perſon I diſcovered to be that fooliſh fellow Povey, who by her directions, offered me his arm to aſſiſt me home.

"But, good Heavens! ſo completely had the inſolence of this family humbled me in the eyes of this deſpicable being, that even he added his tribute of inſult to that I had already endured: his impertinence however reſtored me to the pride of offended dignity, and I left the place with ſenſations leſs painful, I will venture to aſſert, than thoſe which agitated the boſom of the ſelf-condemned Morteyne."

Miſs Beauclerc here cloſed her lamentable narrative, which added conſiderably to the miſery of Roſella, who writhed with agony at the deſcription of her indignant friend's interview with the aſtoniſhed inhabitants of Guairdy Park.

"Not for the world," thought ſhe, "would I now ſee Lord Morteyne, or any part of his family: if Miſs Beauclerc will not ſuffer me to go to Dunkeld, I will ſhut myſelf up in my chamber, and nothing ſhall induce me to quit it."

With great doubt of its ſucceſs, ſhe made her propoſition, and was much ſurpriſed to find it complied with: indeed Miſs Beauclerc, who well knew that a heroine ſhould never place her foot over the threſhold of her charming dwelling without an adventure, was in hopes this expedition might furniſh one, at leaſt, to conſole her for the horrible defection of two men, whom in looking forward to the career of Roſella's brilliant adventures, ſhe had marked, in imagination, for the main ſprings of the whole machinery. She complied with her wiſh, that Maclean ſhould attend her, and deſired ſhe would return in a chaiſe if ſhe found herſelf fatigued. Mr. Craufurd was as uſual, charged with innumerable commiſ-

ſions,

ſions, which Roſella promiſed not to forget mentioning to him.

As ſhe parted with Miſs Beauclerc for the night, ſhe received a parental embrace and a tender bleſſing, which renewed the combat ſhe had before experienced between incredulity and a ſort of innate conviction, that much diſquieted her. She had however, ſo little of the ſublime in her nature, that it never entered her imagination to conſult the pale moon till any great clock ſtruck the morning hour, or even to ſtand gazing till midnight upon the pine-clad hill, marking very carefully all its inflexions by the deepening ſhades—no, ſhe endeavored to compoſe herſelf to reſt, and after ſome time had elapſed, which the agitation of her mind ſtole from her ſlumbers, her eyelids cloſed in forgetfulneſs, merely from theſe phyſical reaſons, that ſhe was not yet quite eighteen, and was in perfect health.

The

The conſequence was, that in the morning ſhe was not ſo unfortunate as to overſleep the hour ſhe had appointed for her departure—an accident that will happen in ſpite of philoſophy, if people do not go to bed till the ſun riſes, and the birds begin to carol their morning ſong; a practice much to be deplored in behalf of thoſe gentle creatures who are confined, it may be againſt their inclination, in an old tower of an old caſtle, and by ſuch a lamentable misfortune, ſometimes loſe a long-projected opportunity, as their hiſtorians inform the world, of making their eſcape.

Roſella had determined to ſet out at ſix o'clock, when ſhe thought there would be little probability of having her promenade interrupted by any of the Guairdy family, or their gueſts; and as ſhe ſuppoſed Mrs. Craufurd would invite her to ſtay dinner at Dunkeld, ſhe hoped at her return, they would be engaged at table, from which ſhe

ſhe concluded they did not riſe till very late.

Having breakfaſted, ſhe called for Maclean, who appeared in his beſt array, with his red hair combed out to its full length, his hideous countenance ſhining with the rough ablution it had undergone, and grinning with complacency at the honor to which his deſtiny had promoted him.

Roſella ſatisfied herſelf that he was well acquainted with the road to Dunkeld, and began her expedition with more ſpeed than it was likely ſhe ſhould continue, congratulating herſelf at every twenty ſteps, that ſhe was leaving Guairdy and the cottage behind her.

Miſs Beauclerc, who had performed all the ceremonies of watching, praying, gazing at the pale beams of the moon and at its ſhadows, and clock-counting, was not ſo matinal as her young companion: but ſhe heard

heard her depart, and recollecting that Lord Morteyne would probably call in the morning, though no time had been mentioned, ſhe ſtarted up and dreſſed herſelf haſtily, that ſhe might have time to ſeek amongſt her papers, which ſhe always carried from place to place with her, and which were almoſt as numerous and ill-arranged as thoſe of a Prime Miniſter, for thoſe relating to the bond and money obligations of her deceaſed huſband, to the late Mr. Eſtcourt.

She ſought however nearly two hours in vain, and after a ſtrong conteſt between hunger and ſublimity, finding that hunger remained maſter of the field of battle, ſhe rung for her breakfaſt, which was to be placed as uſual in the muſic-room, and deſired Nancy to put every thing quickly in order in the adjoining one, where ſhe intended to receive the culprit, and overwhelm him with regret for having ſo baſely given up the taſte he ought to have cultivated,

vated, for the delicious and tranquil pleaſures to be found under a thatched roof.

Nancy, who could not, as ſhe juſtly obſerved to herſelf, do two things at once, and concluded that the moſt preſſing command was that which related to the breakfaſt, employed herſelf in getting it ready, and iſſued her own orders and inſtructions to Menie to accompliſh the other taſk.

Miſs Beauclerc quite forgetting the reduced ſtate of her rural houſehold, and ſatisfied with having ſignified her pleaſure, as if ſhe had been ſurrounded by domeſtics as at Avelines, again reſumed her employment, which laſted almoſt two hours longer; and the breakfaſt was ſcarcely concluded, and the neceſſary documents brought to light, before Nancy ran into the room in an agony of perturbation, and announced the Lord.

"Have

"Have you ſhown his Lordſhip into the portico-chamber?" aſked her miſtreſs, in ſome emotion.

"Yes, Madam," replied Nancy, trembling. "Oh jemini!" whiſpered ſhe, as ſhe withdrew, "now all the murder will out, as ſure as thunder!"

Miſs Beauclerc heard the ſoliloquy, and applied it to her own grievances; for ſhe imagined them of ſo ſerious and wide-ſpreading a nature, that even the domeſtics of both families were well acquainted with them, and ſympathized in the wrongs of the offended beauty. She was now however, compelled to diſmiſs every idea except that of aſſuming the moſt dignified attitude, and the moſt majeſtic air that ever marbled the features of injured virtue: and having at length ſucceeded to her wiſh, ſhe threw open the door of the audience-room, and beheld—the agonized Morteyne pacing the apartment perhaps, with the pale face of deſpair, and the frantic motions of a mad-

man

man—no!—he was very compoſedly ſtanding at the entrance of the portico, thinking of the improvements he had long meditated at Guairdy, towards which his eyes were earneſtly bent; but Miſs Beauclerc beheld one of the frames of her drawings ſhattered to pieces, and fragments of glaſs ſtrewed about the carpet, which near the entrance of the room had loſt much of its cleanlineſs and brilliancy: the portico exhibited likewiſe ſome ſymptoms of recent diſaſter, for ſeveral plants had been laid low, and the earth, eſcaped from the pots, had not been gathered up, but mixed very cordially with the water the ſaucers had contained, and made the fineſt bed of mud in the world: yet even this Miſs Beauclerc might have forgiven, but to climax the misfortunes of the day, every chair in the room exhibited a black and very perfect impreſſion of a pair of broad naked feet, which like the creſt or arms of the proprietor, appeared to have been purpoſely ſtamped there, to aſcertain the right of poſſeſſion.

This

This was too much for heroiſm itſelf to ſupport with patience and fortitude. Surpriſe, anger, and confuſion chaſed away every ſymptom of calm dignity from her features; and when Lord Morteyne with ſome difficulty, made his way towards her with the uſual ſalutation, ſhe found it impoſſible to reſume any compoſure or preſence of mind. To have pointed with ſilent gravity to a ſeat, and taken one herſelf, could not be done, as ſuch a movement would have transferred the drawing of Menie's feet to her garments, and thoſe of the gentleman.

Whether this idea, or any other ſtill more whimſical, ſtruck upon the imagination of Lord Morteyne, cannot be decided: he could not however forbear ſmiling, as he begged to be informed of her commands.

"I have no commands for Lord Morteyne," ſaid the lady, with leſs ſeverity of manner than ſhe had originally intended to have

have diſplayed; "but if your Lordſhip will take the trouble to walk into the next room, I will relate the motive that urged me to treſpaſs thus upon your time."

He complied with the requeſt in ſilence, imagining he was doomed to liſten to a long hiſtory of complaints, excited by the overflowing gall of Mrs. Tadpole, his Guairdy houſekeeper—a mortification he choſe however to endure, rather than ſuffer his Lady to be tormented with the trouble of ſettling the affair: and with this prepoſſeſſion, he was extremely ſurpriſed to obſerve Miſs Beauclerc unfolding a number of papers apparently of ancient date, which would aſſiſt her, ſhe ſaid, in elucidating the myſtery ſhe was then going to explain.

My Lord at this hint looked exceſſively grave, in proportion as the hands of the Lady began to tremble, her cheeks to flow with tears, and her boſom to ſob, as the writing of her long loſt love was unveiled

to her fond eyes. She ſnatched ſome of the papers, and preſſed them to her heart—

"Father of my Roſella!" exclaimed ſhe. And the eye of Lord Morteyne caught the name of Eſtcourt repeatedly traced on moſt of the papers. This circumſtance, joined to the ejaculation, excited a greater degree of intereſt in his mind than he had believed it to be in the power of Miſs Beauclerc to excite, and he waited very impatiently to be relieved from ſome unpleaſant ſenſations of anxiety and alarm.

"You had an uncle?" ſaid the gentle *elucidator*, after a pauſe of ſome moments.

"I had three, Madam," returned her auditor.

"It may be," reſumed Miſs Beauclerc, rather diſconcerted: "but the man to whom I owe all the hours of ſorrow I have known —the man whoſe vices were deſtined to be a ſcourge to me and mine!—Alas, my Lord, I have little inclination to rejoice in the proſperity of your houſe, and your Lordſhip

ſhip cannot wonder that I ſhould ſuffer my anguiſh to relieve itſelf in the bitterneſs of complaint."

"Perhaps, Madam," ſaid he rather gravely, "I ſhould wonder leſs, if you would do me the honor to give me ſome intimation of the injuries you ſeem to deplore."

"I entreat your patience," cried the lady: "ſurely, my Lord, you will allow for the imbecility of grief?"

"I compaſſionate imbecility of whatever kind it may be," replied Lord Morteyne; "but give me the liberty to obſerve, that my impatience to learn the grievances you hint at, is in part the effect of an earneſt wiſh to alleviate them."

"That, my Lord, is not in your power," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc, with ſomething of anger in her manner.

"If it is ſo," obſerved he, "you will pardon me, Madam, that I am at a loſs to comprehend why you have given yourſelf this trouble. You mentioned the name of the young lady who reſides with you—I am

am unacquainted with her family or her connexions; but if Lady Morteyne or my ſiſter, have the power of ſerving her, I will be reſponſible for their inclination."

The indignation and diſdain of Miſs Beauclerc at this, propoſition, were unbounded—

"My Lord," ſaid ſhe, "I will ſhorten what I meant to ſay—this bond, which I found amongſt my father's papers, was granted to the Honorable Thomas Eſtcourt, a man without one good principle or inherent virtue."

"He is no more, Madam; and in the name of his ſurviving relations, I entreat that you will ſuffer the name of my uncle ——"

"You had *three*, my Lord!" retorted the lady in great heat and agitation; "and I hope thoſe you ſtill boaſt of, amply conſole you and the ſurviving relations, for your ineſtimable loſs in the third."

Lord Morteyne was piqued, becauſe he was really conſcious that Mr. Eſtcourt had by no means been an ornament to the family name.

"I take my leave, Madam," ſaid he haughtily, and riſing as he ſpoke.

Miſs Beauclerc felt rather ſhocked that her reſentment had been rouſed to a degree ſo far exceeding the gentle anger of a heroine, and replied, with a more ſubdued air—

"Take with you, my Lord, theſe memorials of your uncle," preſenting him the bond: "take with you likewiſe my note for the ſum marked in it, the ſole inheritance of a much-injured orphan! and when next the family exploits are emblazoned, forget not to record in the name of the Honorable Thomas Eſtcourt, the ruin and death of a credulous but virtuous man, and the beggary of his helpleſs child!"

Having

Having pronounced this ſentence with proper emphaſis, the lady ſuddenly vaniſhed, leaving Lord Morteyne motionleſs with ſurpriſe and diſmay, internally agitated by wounded pride, and a fear that theſe charges might be too well founded. The bond and note he knew not how to diſpoſe of, but he reſolved not to retain them in his poſſeſſion after he had quitted the houſe: yet he was entirely averſe to tempt a ſecond interview with Miſs Beauclerc, whoſe emotions, exclamations, and elucidations were too ſublime for his taſte, and who, to finiſh the ſcene in ſtyle, was now ſobbing in the next room in ſo audible a key, that his Lordſhip could not fail to hear her.

He obſerved that the poor lady had locked the door of communication between them, and he could not therefore return the papers into her poſſeſſion. But at length, his firſt confuſion ſubſiding, he recollected that, as writing materials lay upon the table before him, he could encloſe

them in a wafered cover, under Miſs Beauclerc's addreſs, very ſafely; which he haſtened to do, that he might fly the houſe, and eſcape any further pathetic declamation.

This taſk accompliſhed, he endeavored to open the door leading to the garden, and finding that it was faſtened, rung the bell, to be relieved from his dilemma: but Nancy, fancying this ſummons was the prelude to anger, ſcolding, and perhaps diſmiſſion, inſtead of anſwering it in perſon, ran into the grove to hide herſelf; and Menie, who was a ſtill greater culprit, followed her example.

Lord Morteyne rung a ſecond time—a third time, and Miſs Beauclerc ſtill ſobbed in the next room. At length his patience was ſo wholly exhauſted, that he ventured to intrude upon her ſorrows, by a humble petition ſtating his caſe, and praying relief.

"It

"It is in vain to ſue, my Lord," ſaid the mourner, interrupting him, "I will not ſee you."

"But for heaven's ſake *hear* me, Madam," ſaid he; "I cannot quit the room."

"I have already heard too much," ejaculated Miſs Beauclerc with a deep ſigh.

Lord Morteyne was not of the ſame opinion, ſo he renewed his efforts to explain his ſituation.

"My Lord, I inſiſt that you leave the houſe," cried ſhe vehemently.

"I deſire it equally with yourſelf," retorted the priſoner: "and if you would condeſcend to liſten, I would inform you that the other door of this apartment is locked."

Miſs Beauclerc was now upon her knees, invoking the ſpirit of her ſainted huſband—of courſe no ſublunary ſound could reach her ear, and Lord Morteyne, finding all explanation vain, turned to the window, in the hope

of making his ſortie from thence: but unfortunately, it happened to be a Gothic caſement ſo interlaced with wood work, that he ſaw the attempt would be uſeleſs, unleſs he ſhould be reduced to the deſperate neceſſity of breaking a way through—an alternative he really began to fear he muſt have recourſe to. Once more he applied to the bell, with a vehemence that ſoon ended every hope from that expedient, by pulling it down. He now no longer heard the voice of the lady in the adjoining room, and imagined ſhe had quitted it, until a renewed plaint ſtruck his ear.

"Miſs Beauclerc," ſaid he eagerly, "I believe you have not underſtood me——"

"Ceaſe," exclaimed ſhe, "ceaſe your uſeleſs importunity—I am immoveably fixed!"

"And ſo it ſeems am I!" muttered he: then raiſing his voice, "Good God! will you not liſten to me? I have been this laſt half hour endeavoring to make you ſenſible that I am a priſoner—the glaſs door is locked,

locked, Madam, as well as this, and my importunity will not ceaſe until you have ordered one of your domeſtics to open it."

No anſwer was returned to this eclairciſſement: indeed Miſs Beauclerc, fully determined to ſtand the ſiege ſhe ſuppoſed the remorſe of Lord Morteyne was preparing her, had quietly retired, to import from her chamber ſome books and her writing-deſk, which ſhe choſe to do without aſſiſtance, that ſhe might not expoſe his frantic demeanor to her ſervants.

When ſhe returned, ſhe heard his Lordſhip laughing aloud; for the ridicule of his ſituation ſtruck him ſo forcibly, that he forgot his recent emotions: and as he was now convinced that his captivity had been deſigned, he concluded that the former part of the farce had not much foundation in truth.

"Poor maniac!" ſighed Miſs Beauclerc, who imagined that his agonies had overſet

his reaſon: a revolution, however ſudden and violent, ſhe had read many inſtances of—" What will now avail your unhappy bride, that ſhe has triumphed over an artleſs and lovely young creature, and planted a thorn in her guileleſs boſom not to be extracted?"

Lord Morteyne could only hear a few words of this ejaculation; but the mention of his bride reminding him that his prolonged abſence might alarm her, he very earneſtly renewed his entreaties that Miſs Beauclerc would open the door, which ſhe refuſed with the perſeverance of a heroine; and he proteſted, that if ſhe continued to treat him in ſo abſurd and unprecedented a manner, ſhe muſt excuſe the conſequence.

The lady returned no anſwer, but ſtepping towards the offices, eſpied Menie creeping into the kitchen, with all the precaution ſhe could uſe, that ſhe might not be heard. Miſs Beauclerc beckoned her to follow, and returned

turned to her poſt, Menie ſtanding near the entrance of the room, hanging down her head, that ſhe might not have the horror of beholding the devaſtation her awkward deſtiny, and the unlucky commands of Nancy, had made her commit. Her Lady remained ſilent, and in a few minutes a horrid craſh was heard from the muſic-room.—Miſs Beauclerc ſtarted, and her attendant ſtared. The noiſe was continued, and ſhortly ſucceeded by an outrageous knocking and thumping, as if his impriſoned Lordſhip had been amuſing his *ennui* by applying the poker to the chairs and tables.

Miſs Beauclerc was now really frightened. "Run," exclaimed ſhe, "run, Menie, and inform his unhappy family that Lord Morteyne has loſt his reaſon!"

"Maun I ſay that the deil's in him?" aſked Menie, in ſome doubt.

"Yes, yes," replied her Lady, ſtill more alarmed on hearing the uproar increaſe;—

" ſay that his mind's o'erthrown, that Reaſon is hurled from her ſeat !"

" Trath, and a does hairl 'em," thought Menie ; " a hairls 'em mair than I hairl'd 'em wi my pauky feet !"

She then ſet off with great ſpeed for Guairdy, to give the alarm, telling every one ſhe met, that the Laird had ſauled himſel to the deil, and was deleerit and roaring doon at Maiſtreſs's hooſe, looder than the roombling brig.

This alarming report ſoon ſpread amongſt the ſervants, ſome of whom ruſhed into the apartment of Lady Lucy, where unfortunately her ſiſter-in-law happened to be, and repeated the diſmal news in her preſence.

Lady Morteyne fainted ; and ſome of the moſt unmoved of her gueſts endeavored to render her ſome aſſiſtance, whilſt Lady Lucy, almoſt as diſtracted as her brother was repreſented to be, ran towards the cottage to

aſcertain the truth, which was *elucidated* much ſooner than ſhe could have hoped, by the appearance of Lord Morteyne walking with the utmoſt compoſure to Guairdy, with his right hand bound up in a handkerchief ſtained with blood. She embraced him with affectionate concern; and not ſeeing any other mark of emotion on his countenance than ſurpriſe at her behaviour, began to loſe her apprehenſions, and ventured to aſk what accident had happened to him.

"The moſt ſtrange and abſurd," replied he, "that could poſſibly happen: I have been a priſoner, Lucy, to a fair lady, and could only eſcape her enchantments by breaking her windows and window-frames, which my impatience prompted me to do, and in the exploit I have cut my hand. That poor woman at the cottage, as ſhe calls the place, is as completely deranged as any of Doctor W—'s patients; ſhe ought not to be at this moment without a ſtrait-waiſtcoat!"

This retorted charge of inſanity appeared to Lady Lucy ſo much better founded than the firſt, that ſhe entirely loſt her ſuſpicions of the greater evil.—" How I pity that poor girl," exclaimed ſhe, " who accompanies her from place to place! Surely ſhe ought to be reſcued from ſuch a ſituation!"

" We muſt leave her to her deſtiny," replied Lord Morteyne; " for Miſs Beauclerc is equal to the abſurdity of giving out that ſhe is a natural child of the family, deſerted from infancy; or of embroiling us in a law-ſuit for property, of which ſhe pretends our deceaſed uncle plundered the father of this girl."

The exclamations of Miſs Beauclerc, of which he now retained but a confuſed recollection, and the bond hiſtory commixed, formed in the mind of Lord Morteyne an aſſociation of ideas he thus explained.

Lady Lucy looked aſtoniſhed, and ſo did her brother, on perceiving a number of domeſtics

meſtics flying towards them, headed by his male gueſts, and followed by thoſe of the ladies who moſt abounded in courage and curioſity.

"What the devil," exclaimed he, "is the meaning of all this?"

Lady Lucy could ſcarcely forbear laughing.—"Our friends," replied ſhe, "have heard that your ſituation required aſſiſtance, and I ſuppoſe they are marching this way to offer it."

Lord Morteyne, thinking ſhe alluded to his impriſonment, ſmiled at the idea of being reſcued from the lady's power by a *poſſe comitatus*.

By this time he was ſurrounded by his gueſts and his houſehold, excepting of the former, Mr. Povey, who, having become both a great man and a faſhionable man, could not poſſibly traverſe the ſpace of a mile

and

and a half without his horſes and ſervant: and whilſt the groom was getting ready at a minute's notice, he amuſed himſelf with aſking queſtions of Menie, who was in the ſtable-yard, and had been giving a long detail of the diſaſters of the morning, to a helper who was her admirer.

From her, Mr. Povey learned that Roſella was gone to Dunkeld, that ſhe walked there, and would walk back with Maiſter Maclean: that Maiſter Maclean was the gardener, and had ſaid they could not return till evening.

Menie now found another auditor in Mr. Eſtcourt, who had but then arrived at the ſeat of his brother; and having overtaken the numerous party in the park, juſt ſtaid to hear the outline of the ſtory which appeared to divert them ſo extremely, before he haſtened to the houſe, to take ſome repoſe after having paſſed the preceding night in receiving a feſtive welcome to the North.

Happy

Happy was it for the quiet of Roſella, that ſhe never heard the converſation which now paſſed between this gentleman and the worthy Mr. Povey, when they had diſmiſſed poor Menie, whom they joined very manfully to curſe to all eternity, for being freckled like a toad, and having a damned noſe like the rump of a gooſe. Indeed the *ci-devant* attorney's clerk was one of the moſt valiant oath-fanciers in the three kingdoms; for he really believed that the firſt commiſſion preſented to him through the folly of his uncle, not only entitled him to the honors of the ſword and cockade, but included him as part owner of a patent, for every abſurdity and vice he ſo often envied his former friends for appearing to hold the privilege of committing with impunity, by their initiation into the court of faſhion—that raree-ſhow, which, to the gaping and ſhallow-headed gazers without, ſeems adorned with ſuch exquiſite allurement!—Put your noſes into the box, good people, and ſee what wretched

wretched machinery, what cut paper and gilt trumpery you regard with admiring eyes!

Mr. Povey was now no longer a Cornet of the Guards, for he wiſhed to riſe rapidly, and had purchaſed a company in a regiment of foot then in Scotland; meaning, by a ſecond change, to daſh again into high life, as the irreſiſtible Colonel Povey, whom all the women ogled and died for, in vain.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

A botanical journey—and an elucidation of a little quiet menage.

ROSELLA, during the fracas at the cottage, and that at Guairdy, unconſcious of the extent to which her miſtaken friend meant to carry her heroiſm, retraced the romantic road to Dunkeld, aſſiſted by the more habitual knowledge of her attendant, who happened perchance, to poſſeſs that intuitive genius and taſte for botanical ſtudies, which has, within a few years, ſo ſuddenly overtaken ladies of faſhion in the ſpring, the ſummer, nay, even the autumn of life.

Poor

Poor Maclean had no idea of ſtringing rhimes to celebrate the ſentimental and intereſting amours of the plants, but he could not paſs the verdant ſide of a hill without noſing it like a ſpaniel. In vain did he repeatedly obſerve his young Lady waiting the reſult of his ſearch after the game he moſt coveted; a ſprig of heath, with a bloſſom or leaf varying from what he had hitherto ſeen, well rewarded his trouble, and encouraged him to proceed.

At length Roſella, extremely weary of this method of journeying, when ſhe ſaw him flying out of the road, demanded very exactly which way ſhe ought to take when ſhe arrived at the top of the next hill, or which path ſhe ought to purſue when ſhe reached the valley, and then walked forward, leaving him to overtake her when his aim had been, for that time at leaſt, accompliſhed.

Maclean gladly received the indulgence which the good-nature of Roſella allowed him:

him: but at length the load he had accumulated, not only in his pockets, but in his hat, in his waiſtcoat, and in his handkerchief, which he carried with great care in his hand, and the quick march he was often compelled to uſe, to rejoin his young Lady, added to the warm rays of the ſun, which ſeemed to have communicated its moſt glowing beams to his golden hair, made him look like thoſe Warwickſhire colliers who traverſe the underwoods at night, with a blazing fire upon their heads. With him however, the fire conſiſted of the head itſelf; and his countenance, the natural expreſſion of which was ſurpriſe from the elevation of his thick red brow, and conſternation from the hanging of his immenſe under lip, now appeared ſo gorgon-like, that Roſella was ſtruck with horror every time ſhe turned her eyes upon him—and yet, like the head of Meduſa, that of Maclean was ſo extraordinary, that it every moment attracted her regards.

with him meet As Bard
may fancy Die And Jog Deward
the Morning morning

As they approached Dunkeld, ſhe began to feel ſome reluctance to enter the town with him, conceiving, not without ſome reaſon, that the figure of her conductor would procure her the honor of more attention than ſhe wiſhed to receive; but there was no remedy for the evil apprehended, except indeed that Roſella, in the hope of reducing the color in Maclean's cheek bones, deſired him to reſt himſelf in a grove of firs near the river, whilſt ſhe took a ſurvey of the town, and the beautiful country before her.

He was very glad to obey this injunction, from the violent heat and fatigue he endured: and Roſella, intending to let him remain half an hour where he had placed himſelf to arrange his treaſures, aſcended one of the hills with which Dunkeld is ſurrounded, and gazed with much pleaſure upon the meandering Tay, and its lovely banks; but her recollection was ſuddenly recalled to her attendant, by hearing a violent

violent outcry, and beholding him at the ſame moment ſtruggling in the ſtream, by which ſhe had recommended it to him to repoſe himſelf.

She haſtily ran towards the unfortunate botaniſt, but without any diſtinct hope of aſſiſting him; and had the ſatisfaction to obſerve that he ſucceeded in extricating himſelf from his perilous ſituation, but with the loſs of his hat, his handkerchief, and the fruit of his eager reſearches.

Roſella enquired very earneſtly what had occaſioned the accident, and learned that Maiſter Maclean inſtead of following her inſtructions, had been ſeeking for a peculiar ſort of *mentha aquatica*, and leaning too far over the bank, had felt a ſudden giddineſs, probably from the rays of the ſun darting upon his uncovered head, and the heated ſtate of his blood, which had cauſed him to loſe his balance, and plunge into the Tay.

The

The ſatisfaction which his eſcape from death occaſioned her, ſoon gave way to compaſſion for the ſhivering fits which now ſeized him; beſides the more immediate anxiety to get him to the houſe of Mr. Craufurd with as little obſervation as poſſible.

Roſella haſtily wiſhed ſhe had been content to have endured the mortification of the poor fellow's attendance, before his unlucky immerſion had given the finiſhing touches to his appearance: but as it was, ſhe reſolved to wave all ſcruples of delicacy, and endeavor to ſpare him a fever, by proceeding without delay to Mr. Craufurd's, where ſhe concluded he would be relieved from his wet drapery, which did not hang about him with ſo much elegance as that of ſome ladies of ton, the labor of whoſe toilet conſiſts in putting on the appearance of very ſlender ſea-nymphs, juſt riſen from their coral beds.

Maclean

Maclean led the way, refreſhing the earth as he paſſed on, with his dripping favors; whilſt Roſella followed, looking earneſtly in the eyes of thoſe ſhe met, to diſcover the opinion they formed of herſelf, and her conductor, who, on his part, bitterly lamented the cataſtrophe that deprived him of the weeds, roots, and rubbiſh he had collected.

Fortunately the habitation of Mr. Craufurd was near that part of the town at which they entered; and Roſella had the conſolation of reaching it, with only a moderate ſhare of gazing and conjecturing from thoſe who encountered her and her river god. But this momentary ſmile of fortune was quickly overcaſt, when ſhe learned that Mrs. Craufurd was not at home; and as ſhe had gone ſome miles out of the town with an intention of ſpending the day, Roſella could neither wiſh nor expect to be aſked to eat her dinner at the houſe;—yet as the maſter of it was not abſent, ſhe entreated

entreated permiſſion to reſt herſelf, and having given him a letter entruſted to her by her friend, ſhe ventured to mention the accident that had befallen Maclean, in the hope that Mr. Craufurd would direct his ſervants to accommodate him; but he merely aſſured her that the hide of a Scotch peaſant was water-proof, and began reading his letter without giving the circumſtance a ſecond thought.

After the lecture, he offered her refreſhments, which ſhe refuſed, but was extremely unwilling to quit the place until Maclean could be ſuppoſed to have repaired the effects of his cold bath:—ſhe recollected however, the purchaſes ſhe had intended to make, and mentioned them to Mr. Craufurd, to account for her excurſion into the town; but he, happening to be one of thoſe perſonages, who in the abſence of a wife affect airs of gallantry they are far from having the courage to retain in her preſence, propoſed to have the honor of conducting

ſo charming a young leddy; a politeſſe Roſella would willingly have excuſed, but that ſhe had no pretext for declining it. She entreated indeed that ſhe might not give him ſo much trouble, and profeſſed that ſhe ſhould be ſorry to take up ſo conſiderable a portion of his time; but theſe proteſts only furniſhed the gentleman with an opportunity of repeating ſome very flouriſhing comments upon her lovelineſs, which rendered any time employed in her ſervice, deleetfully plaiſant.

Roſella now felt ſo provoked and diſguſted, that ſhe would have left the houſe and the town immediately, had not her humanity been intereſted for Maclean; as it was, ſhe ſuffered Maiſter Craufurd to continue his harangues, and lead her to the ſhops ſhe had mentioned; and he then propoſed to himſelf to do the honors of the town to the fair ſtranger, entirely forgetting that ſhe might be already fatigued by her walk.

He took care to inform her, that Dunkeld was the principal mart of the Highlands—a circumſtance ſhe cared very little about: but ſhe was obliged to ſurvey with much apparent complacency, the noble ſeat of "Athol's Duke," which it contains, and the ruins of the cathedral, though in fact, ſhe would at the ſame time have preferred the moſt incommodious ſeat in one of the peat-hovels ſhe had paſſed in the morning, to have been releaſed from the abſurd ſtrain into which Mr. Craufurd had wandered, which was the more remarkable, as he had hitherto appeared only in the character of a diligent and obliging *homme d' affaires.*

It was conſiderably paſt two when Roſella re-entered his houſe, and as ſhe underſtood that the dinner was ready to be ſerved up, ſhe would immediately have taken her leave, but that he would not ſuffer her to expreſs ſuch an intention; and as ſhe had not yet acquired, by an intercourſe with the world,

world, that firmneſs of denial which checks importunity, the loquacious entreaties of Mr. Craufurd at length ſilenced her excuſes, and ſhe ſat down to his table exceedingly diſſatisfied with him, and ſtill more diſpleaſed with herſelf.

The cloth was ſcarcely removed, and Roſella was already meditating her eſcape the firſt moment ſhe ſhould find it feaſible, when the lady of the manſion, without any previous notice, made her appearance.

"So, Mr. Craufurd," cried ſhe, ſwinging open the door, and filling up the entrance as ſhe flouriſhed into the room, "I find you keep open houſe in my abſence; people may walk into the office, and ruin you, before you know any thing of the matter."

Then perceiving Roſella occupying her ſeat at the head of the table, ſurpriſe and indignation choaked her utterance, and ſhe turned, with a look of ſuſpicious rage,

towards her huſband, who had ſuddenly recovered his firſt character, and was once more the booing and vara obſequious Maiſter Craufurd.

With a mien that deprecated the riſing ſtorm, he haſtened to inform her that his gueſt was Miſs Beauclerc's young friend, who had walked from the cottage with a letter from that gude leddy, and had been much vexed and chagrined in not finding Maiſtreſs Craufurd at home.

Maiſtreſs Craufurd unknit her brow at this intelligence, for ſhe had not immediately recognized Roſella; and whilſt the ebbing of the moſt indignant ſenſations ſtill marked her countenance, ſhe forced it into a grin, and proteſted that what with her ſurpriſe at the honor Miſs Montreſor had conferred upon her, and what with the diſappointment ſhe had experienced, at finding the friend ſhe had viſited, too ill to keep her and the reſt of the party to dinner, ſhe

ſhe hardly knew what ſhe was about: an aſſertion ſhe immediately verified, by whiſking her cloak from her ſhoulders with ſuch a graceful circuitous motion, that it carried two or three wine glaſſes, and a deſſert plate from the table, to which ſhe had unfortunately advanced when Roſella roſe to ſalute her.

The poor lady, beholding the devaſtation ſhe had committed, made a violent effort to laugh at the accident, calling at the ſame time upon Mr. Craufurd to wonder at her ill-luck throughout the day; but he, gude mon, was much more occupied in reflecting that the black cloud of his wife's diſpleaſure, which was paſſing over the head of her handſome gueſt with ſuch difficulty of retention, would inevitably burſt upon his own with a fury entirely irreſiſtible.

"Well, my dear," continued Mrs. Craufurd, "I am glad you had your dinner ſooner than ordinary, becauſe I dare ſay this young

lady was not ſorry to ſit down to a good joint, after her walk; but if you *had* ſtaid the uſual hour, I ſhould juſt have come in pudding time, which is what I thought to myſelf as I came along: but I began the day with ill-luck, and ſo I ſhall go through with it!"

"I am very much concerned," ſaid Roſella, whoſe color had heightened during this ſpeech, "that I——"

"Oh dear, don't ſay a word, Miſs Montreſor; it could not be any fault of your's, you know: if any body is in fault, it's Mr. Craufurd!" and then followed an attempt to make this hint ſound like a badinage, by an hyſterical giggle.

"Will ye have the claith laid," ſaid the implied culprit, who was anxious to divert the attack, "and arder ſomething to be gat?"

After a pettiſh refuſal, ſhe complied: and Roſella, who was now really uneaſy leſt ſhe ſhould not be at home before the twilight overtook her, had the mortification of ſeeing the

the mangled joint re-appear, which the lady turned from ſide to ſide twenty times with extreme diſguſt, and then declaring that ſhe could never endure tepid meat, diſmiſſed it with an order to bring in the cold pie:—ill luck again! the pie was entirely demoliſhed!

"Well then I muſt faſt!" exclaimed ſhe, half crying. "Will you have ſomething dreſſed, my dear?" enquired Mr. Craufurd, in a compaſſionating tone.

"No: when once I am ſet againſt victuals, I do not care for any thing."

This refuſal being deciſive, the huſband would not venture to preſs the ſubject further, and a ſilence of a few minutes enſued, which Roſella took advantage of, and roſe from her ſeat with a farewel compliment.

"I am afraid," ſaid Mrs. Craufurd, half repenting her incivility, yet more than half

inclined to add to it by further rudeneſs, "I am afraid, Miſs, that I ſhorten your viſit?"

Roſella was doubtful in what light this ſpeech was to be conſidered; and whilſt ſhe gazed at the lady in ſome aſtoniſhment—

"I am ſure, Miſs Montreſor," continued ſhe, "I ought to beg your pardon; but if you had felt as uncomfortable as I did—dear me, are you going ſo ſoon?—well—pray preſent my beſt reſpects to the good lady at the cottage, and pray tell her I hope ſhe will think of her promiſe, and come ſoon—that is, drop in in a friendly way, as you have done, and partake our family dinner—you ſee how we live—"

"I do!" thought Roſella.

—"You ſee how we live, ſo pray now contrive to come with her, or elſe I ſhall think our little quiet way does not ſuit your taſte. We have always what you have ſeen to-day, a joint and a pudding—tell Miſs Beauclerc

Beauclerc that is our bill of fare throughout the year: but even that, with a ſincere welcome, and a pleaſant countenance, is to me a feaſt!"

Roſella waited very impatiently for the end of this oration, but it did not appear in the leaſt likely to terminate ſo ſoon as ſhe hoped, for the lady had now pitched into what ſhe called a good-humour, that is a talkative one; and it ſeemed as if ſhe ſuppoſed her loquacity was to efface every remembrance of previous ill temper—an idea ſhe had long been in the habit of indulging, for ſhe was one of thoſe dames who never feel thoroughly complacent towards their gueſts, until they are leaving the houſe.

Roſella having aſſented very readily to all ſhe uttered, and had the pleaſure of hearing that Mrs. Craufurd, being a native of South Britain, was her countrywoman, at length took courage to aſk for Maclean,

who was produced, equipped in an old hat much too ſmall for him, which ſtuck upon the top of his head without covering much of his long hair, not yet nearly dried, ſo that it hung lank and ſtraight; and the *tout enſemble* gave him the appearance of a Puritan of the laſt century.

Mrs. Craufurd followed her fair gueſt to the ſtreet-door, ſtill entreating that ſhe would not fail to remind Miſs Beauclerc of the honor ſhe intended her, and repeating, that now Miſs Montreſor ſaw how they lived, ſhe hoped ſhe would often take a walk to Dunkeld, to dine with Mr. Craufurd and her, in their little quiet way: and not even contented with this, ſhe ſtood at her door, uttering ſentences of the ſame import, till Roſella was abſolutely out of ſight; who, until that fortunate moment arrived, thought herſelf obliged at every other ſtep, to turn round, and bow her acknowledgments.

Maclean followed in ſilence until they reached the ſpot where he had met with his miſadventure, and then, in ſpite of the expoſtulations of his young Lady, he inſiſted upon kneeling by the ſide of the ſtream, and ſtooping over the ſteep bank that roſe beſide it, to obtain a root of the *mentha aquatica*—

"You certainly wiſh for another accident," ſaid Roſella angrily, "or you would not act thus!"

"Meſs," returned Maclean gravely, "I wad na but ha foond this for aw Guairdy and its Laird are worth: it's the *mentha hirſuta*; and thus Maiſter Meller deſcreebes it—Ment wi wharled fluors, aval, ſawed, hairy leaves, and ſtomina langer na the patols.—Meſs, I foond ance upon a time here in my ain coontra, the *mentha virticillata*, which Maiſter Meller ſays graws natrally by the ſeed of the reever Madway: and noo I'm luking —"

"For Heaven's ſake," interrupted Roſella, "do not look juſt now for any thing but our ſhorteſt way home!"—

"And noo I'm luking for the *mentha paluſtris*."

By this time ſhe had diſcovered, to her extreme terror, that Maclean was much intoxicated; and inſtantly formed the deſign of returning to Dunkeld, and hiring a conveyance to the cottage, which ſhe deſpaired of reaching by his guidance:—but it was impoſſible to drag him from the back of his hobby horſe, and as Roſella did not like the idea of reviſiting the houſe of Mr. Craufurd, and was too timid to enter an inn-gate without an attendant, ſhe very unwillingly proceeded, as well as ſhe could, taking care not to leave her nominal conductor too far behind, as her humanity ſuggeſted a care in his behalf he was far from having himſelf.

With

With much difficulty and loſs of time ſhe had repaſſed more than half the way, and congratulating herſelf that the ſun was not yet ſet, ventured to repoſe herſelf a few minutes whilſt ſhe waited the leiſure of Maiſter Maclean. The ſpot ſhe had choſen preſented on every ſide a ſcene ſo ſingularly beautiful, that Roſella forgot all her recent vexations whilſt ſhe contemplated it. The road bordered one ſide of a river, which rolled tumultuouſly over a bed of rocks, many of them riſing above its ſurface, and lying in ſuch numbers that they appeared to oppoſe the flowing of the ſtream, which collecting its waters to overcome the check, forced its way with a violent current, and formed caſcades, whoſe murmurs at a ſmall diſtance invited the wanderer to repoſe.

A meandering of the river overflowed a ſpace of lowland, and was yet ſhallow enough to leave a riſing ſpot uncovered, where a group of cattle were browſing, whilſt

whilſt others ſtood mid-leg in the ſtream, enjoying its freſhneſs. As the quality of the capricious ſoil varied, Roſella beheld the naked cliff towering abrupt over her head, or the gentler riſe of the verdant hill, chequered with foliage: through the fiſſure of a rock, an immenſe pine had forced its once budding growth, and now hung oblique in waving terror over a cataract the ſame rock had formed below it.

Further on, the double chain of mountains appeared to meet each other; but before the perſpective cloſed, the eye of Roſella was directed by a vivid ſun-beam that darted through a break, to a bridge, compoſed of the body of a large oak, either felled by a tempeſt, or directed by human care, to croſs "high in air," from the ſummits of oppoſing cliffs: a rude and irregular railing aſſiſted the giddy paſſenger, who "maun na luk bot where his foot do tread," and at this moment a highlander was croſſing the Alpine paſs, whoſe tartan pladdie

pladdie ſhone right gay in the reflection of the ſetting ſun.

A pack-horſe plodding through the bourn Roſella had juſt paſſed, was led, or rather dragged along by a Scotch laſſie, who at every interval of perſuaſion and baſtinado, neither of which ſhe ſpared towards the animal, made the glen ring with a lively air, the burthen of which ſhe often repeated—" Wad ye ſta here out owre the day, ye pauky beaſtie !" and then followed a thump, with part of the ſong.

" He glowr'd at me as he'd been daft,
" The loon trows that I'll hae him ;
" Hoot awa I winna hae him ;
" Nae forſooth I'll nae hae him :
" New hoſe and new ſhoon—"

" Ye're nae friſket trow ! Ye wad let a mouſie tak the road o'ye, ye idle carle !" and then another thump.

Roſella

Roſella was much amuſed by obſerving her conſtant rotation of employment; but the girl's admonitions quickened her own recollection, and ſhe ſtarted up to purſue her way, but could no where diſcover Maclean—a circumſtance that alarmed her. She had now left the ſongſtreſs and her idle companion far behind, and her anxiety increaſed, for not a ſingle being enlivened the ſcene, or appeared to anſwer the enquiries ſhe was eager to make. She continued to advance however, and judged that ſhe was not quite a mile from home, when ſhe perceived a well-dreſſed man loitering in the path, who no ſooner caught a glimpſe of her, than he flew to meet her, and in a tone as familiar as if their acquaintance had been of long and approved growth, reproached her for having delayed her return to ſo late an hour.

"However," added he, "it has had one good effect; for thoſe puppies, Eſtcourt and Povey, have ſounded a retreat, and left

me, who was much more deſirous of the *rencontre* than they were, to exult at my ſuperior fortune."

Roſella ſtood aghaſt at this ſtrange addreſs; and the intruder obſerving her conſternation, reſumed with the ſame eaſy air—

"Why you ſeem vexed at it! Surely you had not a deſign upon either of thoſe blockheads? They are more capricious and abſurd than Oberne, and to my certain knowledge, they are equally poor."

She experienced ſuch a rapid ſucceſſion of emotions during this ſecond attack, and her mind was ſo divided between ſurpriſe, anger, fear, confuſion, and reſentment, that ſhe remained immoveable. The voice and features of this familiar perſonage ſhe recollected to have ſeen and heard before, but could not in the leaſt remember where they had met her notice.

A ſuſ-

A ſuſpicion croſſed her mind that this adventure, as Miſs Beauclerc would have called it, was of her contriving; and the idea, unconfirmed as it was, gave her ſuch pain and mortification, that after an unſucceſsful ſtruggle with her ſenſations, the tears ſprung to her eyes: but immediately endeavoring to recover herſelf, ſhe eagerly purſued her way, paſſing by the ſtranger with ſo quick a motion, that he could not prevent it, though he inſtantly rejoined her.

She averted her head to get rid of her tears unperceived, as ſhe expected they would merely excite ridicule; but he ſaw them.

"You are unhappy!" exclaimed he. "Tell me truly, were you attached to Oberne?"

Roſella colored with indignation, and though

though a number of angry replies roſe to her lips, ſhe ſtill remained ſilent.

"Are you dumb?" reſumed he, ſnatching her hand.

She was much alarmed, and called out to Maclean, but with little hope that he would hear her.

"Oh, *à-propos*," ſaid her new acquaintance, "what have you done with your Eſquire? I expected inevitably to have had that dragon to charm to reſt, before I could get at you. What not a word yet? Do, charming—(what is your name)— let theſe ſhady groves, and this purling ſtream, ſpeak with paſtoral perſuaſion in my favor!"

His knowledge of her having had an attendant, confirmed the ſurmiſe that Miſs Beauclerc had planned, or at leaſt permitted, this diſtreſſing ſcene; and the eaſy aſſurance of the young man's manner, and the

the tenor of his language and converſation, which no one could miſtake, too well informed her in what light ſhe was regarded.

"Oh Heavens!" thought Roſella, "does every human being view me with the ſame contempt? Who will then reſcue me from reproach, ſince it is univerſally believed that I but too well merit it!"

Her companion continued talking with the ſame flippancy; but, abſorbed in reflections that occupied her whole ſoul, ſhe heard his voice without hearing the ſenſe of what he uttered, until his impetuoſity recalled her attention.

"No," cried he, detaining her, "you ſhall not proceed unleſs you anſwer me!"

She ſtarted as if ſhe had now obſerved him for the firſt time, and in great agitation begged he would ſuffer her to go on.

"Why

"Why do you not anſwer me?" repeated he.

"What am I to anſwer, Sir?" aſked Roſella trembling.

"Is it poſſible!" exclaimed he: "is this abſence of mind real or feigned?"

"You exceedingly diſtreſs me," ſaid Roſella, with a countenance that marked the truth of the aſſertion; "pray let me walk on."

"Well, you ſhall walk on, and I will renew my enquiry—how long have you left Oberne?"

"Left him!" repeated ſhe, ſtill more ſhocked. All the ignominy of the reports in circulation was now openly expoſed to her view, and almoſt ſinking with agony, ſhe exclaimed — "What will become of me?"

The gentleman appeared much hurt on ſeeing the tears guſh in torrents from her eyes, and apologized in a heſitating voice for having unintentionally given her pain.

"If

"If what I now feel is ſimply pain," cried Roſella, acting the heroine without intending it, "what then is torture?"

"I entreat you will compoſe yourſelf," ſaid her officious companion, "I am in deſpair that I ſtumbled upon ſo unfortunate a ſubject."

What he might further have ſaid was interrupted by a loud hallooing.

"Confound thoſe ideots!" reſumed he, "they have turned back to ſeek me." Then obſerving the increaſed alarm of Roſella, who trembled, and turned very pale, "do not be terrified," he added, "they ſhall not inſult you."

The protection of a perſon who, notwithſtanding what had paſſed, appeared much more rational and humane than the young men he had named, whatever mortification Roſella might feel at being in a ſituation to receive it with thankfulneſs, a little re-aſſured

re-aſſured her, when ſhe beheld Mr. Eſtcourt ſtaggering towards her, with Povey hanging on his arm, vociferating her name, to which they tacked the moſt abſurd epithets of childiſh endearment, accompanying their witticiſms with loud peals of laughter, the violence of which threatened to overſet the uncertain equilibrium they contrived to maintain.

"D—mn this fellow," exclaimed Mr. Eſtcourt, when he perceived in what manner Roſella was attended, "he has jockied us by G—d! Leſley, d'ye call this ſtarting fair?"

"Curſe his Brutus," continued the abſurd Povey in the ſame ſtrain, "we are ouſted! He has been doling out his ſentiment, I know it, and now he will hoax us to the devil!"

"What ſay you, my fair one?" reſumed Eſtcourt, ſeizing the arm of Roſella, who ſhrunk from him with an expreſſion of terror.

The

The young man he had called Leſley, had been whiſpering to Povey, and now interfered, telling the honorable gentleman that he was not half civilized enough to addreſs a milkmaid; and inſtantly diſengaging Roſella from his rude graſp, he walked on with her. But Mr. Eſtcourt was not ſufficiently intoxicated to endure this double inſult without reſentment, and he almoſt immediately followed, notwithſtanding the pretended efforts of his friend Povey to retain him; for this reptile, though he did not dare enter into a diſcuſſion with the more moderate of the three, was far from deſiring that the impertinence he had meditated towards Roſella, ſhould in the leaſt fail, and was pleaſed when the enraged Eſtcourt, contriving with ſome difficulty to impede her progreſs and that of her champion, vehemently demanded a parley, in a tone of defiance that predicted it was not to be an amicable one.

Roſella

Roſella too much agitated to know what ſhe did, and expecting only indignity at his hands, gave him a ſudden puſh, and darting forward, did not ceaſe running until ſhe ſaw the cottage before her. She heard her perſecutors ſhouting violently when ſhe began her race, and ſuſpected that ſhe had driven Mr. Eſtcourt down a ſteep hill, on the edge of which he was ſtanding; for ſhe recollected that he ſtaggered, and thought ſhe had ſeen Leſley catch at him. Their not purſuing her gave coloring to the idea, and an inſtantaneous terror ſeized her, leſt the fooliſh young man ſhould be injured by the fall, and this new diſaſter imputed to her.

CHAP. VIII.

A myſterious manuſcript—muſical travels.

THE firſt perſon ſhe encountered on her return home was Maclean, who had not entered the houſe, but was buſily employed in a ſhed, near the flower-garden, arranging his newly-acquired treaſures: his compoſure and extreme unconcern for her fate, diverted the diſtreſs of Roſella in ſome degree, by exciting her anger; but ſhe choſe to confine it to her own boſom, leſt Miſs Beauclerc, on learning his negligence, ſhould reſent it by diſmiſſing him.

She

She found her whimſical friend ſeated as uſual at her writing-deſk, and though ſhe generally journalized herſelf into a violent fit of enthuſiaſtic heroiſm, Roſella had never beheld her ſo extremely elevated: indeed the exploits of the day, as ſhe delineated them, would have been almoſt ſufficient to have made of the moſt notable houſewife, a convert to the airy doctrines of ſentiment and romance: no wonder then, that the rehearſal of ſuch pathetic and ſublime ſcenes ſhould almoſt give Miſs Beauclerc the mien of a *Princeſſe des coulisſes.*

She ſtretched her arms towards Roſella, exclaiming—

"Come to my boſom, child of my fondeſt affections, ſweet ſoother of thy mother's cares!"

Roſella was at preſent little diſpoſed to humour what ſhe ſuppoſed to be entirely a flight of fancy; yet ſhe advanced and re-

ceived the ſalutation of Miſs Beauclerc, but without that effervescence of filial adoration the good lady fully expected, according to thoſe charming examples ſhe had ſo often wept at, of good-natured young creatures falling in a trance of fondneſs at the feet of thoſe heroic mamas, who determine to make up in careſſes and tenderneſs for the abſence of diſcretion.

"What ails my daughter?" demanded Miſs Beauclerc, in a voice of ſurpriſe, on obſerving her tearful eyes and dejected countenance.

"Oh Madam!" ſaid Roſella, her heart burſting with emotion, "your favor has been moſt fatal to me! Yet I thank you moſt fervently for your long kindneſs, and I beſeech you to believe, that only one circumſtance could extort from me a wiſh to leave you, and that is, an earneſt deſire to recover the good opinion of the world."

"Is

"Is it poſſible," exclaimed Miſs Beauclerc, "that Roſella ſhould imagine her reſidence with her hapleſs mother can draw upon her the cenſure of this world, cruel as it is, of which ſhe ſeems in ſuch dread? But I will not reproach you, unhappy child; you are, I too well ſee, weary of this ſolitude!"

"If this place were really a ſolitude," interrupted Roſella, "I might have been happy in it—I could not then have been mortified and ſhocked by inſults which I am not ſuppoſed to have a right to complain of, becauſe they appear well-merited."

"What inſults do you ſpeak of?" aſked the ſentimental lady with eager curioſity.

"My walk home," returned Roſella, "was interrupted by Mr. Eſtcourt, Mr. Povey, and another of Lord Morteyne's gueſts. I know not who could inform them of it, but they were well appriſed of my excurſion to Dunkeld, and I experienced from

them the moſt contemptuous and inſolent treatment. A young man, a perfect ſtranger to me, but too well betrayed the extent of thoſe injurious reports in circulation! Dear Miſs Beauclerc, let me conjure you to return to Avelines!"

She made no reply; but riſing with an air of dignity, rummaged in an immenſe portable eſcrutoire, and produced a large bundle of papers, which ſhe put into the hands of Roſella.

"Theſe," ſaid ſhe, raiſing her eyes to heaven, and producing, by the force of habit, a few tears, "theſe contain the hiſtory of my woes. Roſella, if you ſhould weep over the ſad and myſterious deſtiny of your mother, remember that you have planted a freſh dagger in her heart!"

Miſs Beauclerc then walked gravely to the door, and quitted the room, leaving Roſella contemplating in ſilence the writing on

on the cover of the packet ſhe held, which conſiſted of characters, blotted apparently with tears, to this effect—

"*Memoirs of the hapleſs Mother of Roſella.*"

She knew enough of the etiquette of heroiſm to be certain, that after ſuch an exit as Miſs Beauclerc had juſt made, it followed of courſe that ſhe muſt ſhut herſelf up in her chamber for an hour or two, and was vexed that ſhe had provoked the cataſtrophe before the tea-table had been ordered;—for in ſpite of her chagrin and anxiety, ſhe was ſenſible of extreme fatigue; and the heat of the weather, joined to the violent exerciſe ſhe had taken, had rendered her feveriſh and thirſty.

She acquieſced however, in her deſtiny, and having nothing better to do, opened the papers of memoirs which ſhe really believed Miſs Beauclerc had been amuſing herſelf with compoſing, and read the following ſentence:—

"When theſe lines meet the weeping eye of my Roſella, the hand that traces them will no longer be animated with ſenſation!"

The writing was that of her friend; and the agitated mind of Roſella conceived an apprehenſion ſo ſhocking, that without proceeding any further, ſhe threw down the narrative, and all the letters which ſerved to illuſtrate and authenticate it, and ran to the apartment of Miſs Beauclerc in the utmoſt horror and alarm. But fortunately her fears were entirely erroneous, for the good lady ſat very quietly by her bed-ſide, abſorbed in thought: ſhe had had it in contemplation indeed, to throw herſelf upon her knees, and reſt her face upon the quilt, but by ſome means the intention was laid aſide, and contrary to her deſign, not renewed, ſo that upon the intruſion of Roſella, ſhe was ſhocked at being ſurpriſed in ſo calm a ſtate, when every warring paſſion ſhould have been contending in her boſom.

Roſella

Roſella ſtopped ſuddenly on beholding her perfectly ſafe and quite compoſed; and when ſhe was aſked why ſhe had ruſhed with ſuch eagerneſs into the room, ſhe ſtood mute and confuſed, and retired without an explanation.

The lines which had given her this alarm, had been written by Miſs Beauclerc with the reſt of the packet, whilſt ſhe was confined by indiſpoſition at Warkworth; and as ſhe was extremely intent upon leaving behind her her memoirs, according to the eſtabliſhed uſage, ſhe forgot that it was poſſible ſhe could recover, or intended, if ſhe ſurvived, to have altered the introductory paragraph—a deſign that afterwards, in the multiplicity of her adventures, entirely eſcaped her memory. The circumſtance however, confirmed Roſella in her opinion that the whole hiſtory was equally fabulous; and inſtead of continuing to read it with avidity and intereſt, ſhe returned languid and liſtleſs, merely to put up the papers, and then ſat unemployed,

ruminating upon the gloomy proſpects that preſented themſelves to her imagination. If ſhe ſucceeded in withdrawing herſelf from the protection of Miſs Beauclerc, without being purſued by reproaches of ingratitude, and if, by retiring from notice, ſhe could ſilence the calumnies ſo cruelly affixed to her name, what had ſhe to look forward to, but a hateful reſidence, dull and unpleaſant aſſociates, who merely tolerated her becauſe ſhe paid her quota of expence in their wretched eſtabliſhment?

She could not hope for any eligible change of ſituation from marriage: for what man, who was not actuated by the deſire of gaining her little property, would be hardy enough (excepting a hero in romance) to entruſt to her keeping his honor and his fame, when ſhe had been found unequal to the taſk of preſerving her own without blemiſh?

Theſe melancholy ideas of the future at length gave way to the embarraſſment of the preſent

preſent moment:—ſhe feared the reſentment of Mr. Eſtcourt, and ſhe had read malice in the eye of Povey; but as ſhe had never offended him intentionally at leaſt, ſhe hoped her ſurmiſe was an unjuſt one; yet ſhe could not diſmiſs it from her imagination, either than the more cruel certainty that ſhe had been addreſſed as the caſt-off miſtreſs of Oberne.

She imagined, from the converſation of the young man called Leſley, that he knew Oberne; and a ſuſpicion croſſed her mind that her Iriſh acquaintance had himſelf given riſe to this injurious report, to excuſe to his gay companions the infatuation of having given ſo much time and attention to Miſs Beauclerc, who had rewarded him only by an abrupt diſmiſſion, and left him to repent at leiſure the expence and ridicule attached to his excurſion. Still however, ſhe could not but think that the character of Oberne was too open and ingenuous, to allow him even tacitly to countenance ſo horrible a falſe-

hood, and at length ſhe acquitted him wholly of the charge, from a reviſion of his conduct.

It was entirely dark before the confuſion of her mind, and the various images that crowded upon it, allowed her to recollect that the lady of the houſe had not propoſed the uſual refreſhment of the afternoon—a refreſhment ſhe had ſo much required. At preſent however, ſhe felt too much indiſpoſed to wiſh for any thing more earneſtly than repoſe; and ringing for Nancy, deſired that ſhe would inform Miſs Beauclerc when ſhe deſcended to ſupper, that ſhe had a headach, and was gone to bed, which ſhe immediately retired to her own chamber to do.

But the agitations of the day were not yet over with poor Roſella. Nancy followed her, and whilſt ſhe aſſiſted her to undreſs, wept bitterly; and after relating the effects of Menie's ſtupidity and awkwardneſs, ſaid they were both to be turned away. Roſella promiſed to intercede for them, and the girl then

then found ſpirits to relate diſaſters in which ſhe had no ſhare.

" I wiped the chairs, and waſhed the carpet as well as I could," continued Nancy; " but I wonders you didn't ſee the kindition they was in! But Lorrk, Miſs! when you coom'd home, did you go into th mooſic-room?"

On receiving a negative, the whole hiſtory of Lord Morteyne's viſit was amply diſcuſſed, as far as it had reached her knowledge through the information of Menie, who told her that Sawney ſaid the Laird of Guairdy was not mad, but the Laird ſaid her miſtreſs was mad; for ſhe had locked him up, and ſwore never to let him go home to his Leddy, who was fainting away all the time, till he took wi him the young Miſs, and called her his ſiſter; and her miſtreſs wanted to give him all her fortune to make him ſay ay, and had tied him to a chair, and locked the doors; but the Laird fought deſpartly,

deſpartly, and tore the houſe down, and got away.

So abſurd a ſcheme, and ſuch frantic proceedings, would certainly not have gained any credit with Roſella, but for the teſtimony Nancy ſpoke of, of the demoliſhed window and frame, and that ſhe was too well aſſured of the truth of the *Laird's* aſſertion, that the mind of her unfortunate friend was actually deranged.

Nancy's portrait of the confuſion at Guairdy, in the firſt moment of alarm, and the univerſal merriment which ſucceeded it, almoſt annihilated her. Well might the unfeeling Mr. Eſtcourt regard her with contempt and deriſion, if he imagined ſhe had the remoteſt knowledge of Miſs Beauclerc's plan.

After Nancy had tortured her for near an hour, with every minute circumſtance ſhe could think of to ſwell the tale to yet greater importance,

importance, ſhe at length bade her agonized auditor good night: but the wiſh was of little avail—no ſleep could viſit thoſe eyelids, which the keeneſt anguiſh forbade to cloſe. The ſtillneſs of night could not bring repoſe, and the dawn of another day was ſtill more unwelcome.

It occurred to Roſella that ſhe might learn, through Menie, whether thoſe apprehenſions were juſt, which tormented her by repreſenting Mr. Eſtcourt falling from the mountain ſide, mangled by the jutting craigs that threaten the unwary traveller whoſe foot ſhould ſtray from the beaten path; and ſhe reſolved to be relieved from her fears, or at leaſt to aſcertain if they were founded, by the intelligence of the Scotch laſſie.

At the uſual hour ſhe deſcended to the breakfaſt room, with an aſpect ſo ſad and ſo wan, that Miſs Beauclerc was terrified, and forgot her memoirs, her diſpleaſure, even her heroiſm in the ſhock ſhe received: ſhe em-

braced

braced Roſella with the utmoſt fondneſs, and ſeeing the tears fall from her heavy eyes, her own accompanied them.

"My deareſt child," exclaimed ſhe, "you are ill! I was unkind laſt night; forgive me, my own Roſella; I was wounded to the ſoul by obſerving that you wiſhed to leave me.—Forgive me, and regain your health, regain your ſweet vivacity, and I will quit this place if you ſtill deſire it."

"Will you promiſe me, dear Madam," ſaid Roſella eagerly, "to return to Avelines as ſoon as poſſible?"

"Oh my daughter!" reſumed Miſs Beauclerc, relapſing into the ſtrain Roſella contemned, "I cannot wonder that you are earneſt to quit the environs of Guairdy! But if it will reſtore your loſt happineſs, I will engage to do ſo."

This unhoped-for conceſſion cheered the invalid; but it could not immediately recal the bloom to her cheeks, or the brilliancy to her

her eye; and when the breakfaſt was removed, ſhe returned to her chamber, whither Miſs Beauclerc accompanied her to aſſiſt in putting her to bed, as the pain in her head ſtill continued very troubleſome, and ſhe was conſcious of want of reſt.

This indiſpoſition however, ſpared her the knowledge of a circumſtance that would have inflicted far greater pangs; for Miſs Beauclerc had ſcarcely left her, and returned to the portico-room, when a very large package was announced from Mr. Craufurd. As ſhe did not expect any piece of furniture, ſhe could not divine what it might be; and having heard that Maclean pronounced it impoſſible to get it into the houſe, as the doors were far from being lofty, the lady, with much curioſity, walked into the poultry-yard, where it had been depoſited.

Her ſurpriſe, on beholding the harp-caſe of Roſella, was not of long duration, as ſhe almoſt immediately comprehended that her obliging

obliging Selina had had it conveyed to her, and gueſſed what her intention had been in this impromptu act of friendſhip.

Had ſhe been at a loſs however, the precaution of Mrs. Ellinger had been ſuch, that her project would not have lain dormant ;— for Miſs Beauclerc eſpied a letter under the card of addreſs, which ſhe eagerly tore off to ſeize her prize. After reading the firſt lines, "I ſuppoſed ſo!" ſaid ſhe aloud.— Then enquiring how the package had arrived from Dunkeld, ſhe learned that it had been placed on the back of a ſtrong pack-horſe, ſupported the whole way in a kind of equipoiſe, by her own errand-boy, and one of his comrades, becauſe it was urgently directed to be forwarded without delay, and Mr. Craufurd had not been able to get any other conveyance.

The many diſaſters the poor harp had met, *chemin faiſant*, with this mode of carriage, the Scotch lads were very prudently ſilent about, ſo

ſo that Miſs Beauclerc, ſuppoſing it to be a very good contrivance, reſolved that it ſhould proceed in the ſame ſtate to Guairdy, which was its goal and deſtination. She retired to write a note of renunciation to Lord Morteyne in the name of Roſella, and after many attempts to climax the ſublime and beautiful, determined to ſend the following billet:—

"MY LORD,

"I addreſs you not in the ſuppoſition that my feeble pen can, by aſſurances of compaſſion the moſt ſympathizing, carry balm to your wounded ſoul! Heart-ſtruck as no doubt your Lordſhip is, from the torturing conviction that you have caſt from you a lovely roſe to bind a thorn to your breaſt, you claim my pity—that of the gentle angel, whoſe peace you have ſo cruelly ſtabbed, has ever been your's. I mean not however, to reproach, but conſole you—you have

have my forgiveneſs, and may the cup of Lethe be your's!

"The perſon who delivers this, has in charge a memorial Roſella Montreſor can now no longer retain of your former attachment: pardon me if I hint that you ought not to preſerve it in your poſſeſſion, as it has once been in her's, that you may not introduce the bitterneſs of jealouſy into a boſom whoſe quiet ought now to be your care.

"Excuſe, my Lord, the liberty I take in appearing to adviſe, and believe that I am

"Your Lordſhip's ſincere friend,

"S. BEAUCLERC."

Perfectly ſatisfied with this heroic performance, ſhe folded, directed, ſealed, and delivered it to Maclean, who was to be one of the ſupporters, and ſhe meant that her errand boy ſhould have been the other; but it was found, on enquiry, that his comrade and himſelf had returned in great haſte to Dunkeld,

keld, upon the back of the extra horſe, becauſe Nancy had unexpectedly diſcovered that ſhe had arrived at the end of her wheaten bread, and that unleſs ſhe diſpatched Jamie in a trice, ſhe ſhould not have any to produce at dinner.

There remained however, the little animal that uſually peregrinated to the town and back again; and the impatience of Miſs Beauclerc to ſend off her *chef d'œuvre* of a note, would not admit of delay. Maclean therefore, aided by Menie, after many uſeleſs efforts, contrived to place the harp and caſe upon the back of the hobby, who bent under its weight.

Yet Maclean could not undertake the care both of the beaſt and the burthen without aſſiſtance, and Menie was very prompt to offer her's quite on' tull Guairdy; and her Lady was ſo much pleaſed with her on this occaſion, that ſhe was reinſtated in her good opinion, and her fault forgotten.

The

The harp then renewed its travels, the little horſe trembling under its uncouth load, Maclean ſupporting the head of the inſtrument, and Menie the foot; and thus they jogged on very quietly, looking like the conductors of ſome curious preſent from a Sultan to a favored Sephi.

Sometimes, if the road was too much of an inclined plane, he or ſhe, who had the lower end of the ſtaff, called to the other to lean all their weight upon the contrary ſide; and Menie, having once ſquatted herſelf upon the huge machine ſhe was far from comprehending the uſe of, with her naked feet dangling in idleneſs, found it ſo agreeable to ride, that ſhe propoſed to Maclean to follow her example, never once reflecting upon the inability of the poor little animal to carry the whole party. Indeed, as ſhe was no great reaſoner, ſhe had no idea that their gravity would deſcend to the back of the poney, if they ſat at the extreme angles of its burthen,

burthen, but thought it would merely centre in the pauky toad of loomber.

Maclean continued however, to walk, and deſired her likewiſe to deſcend, but without making her comprehend why it was neceſſary.

After many hair-breadth eſcapes, and much exertion of ſtrength, they arrived at the end of their journey, no doubt very much to the ſatisfaction of the poor little horſe, which was no ſooner deſcried from afar, accoutred in ſo ſtrange a manner, and Maclean and Menie both recognized as the domeſtics of the mad lady, than the ſervants at the park ran out to diſcover what new freak, to uſe their phraſe, was in the wind.

The affair was ſoon communicated from the *tiers-etat* to the ſecond *etat*, commonly called the ſecond table, and from thence it mounted as rapidly to the *etat majeur*, conſiſting of my Lord, my Lady, and their aſſo-

ciates; and in a few minutes the whole houſe was diſgorged of inhabitants of every claſs, who eagerly flocked round the deputation, in full hope of ſome extraordinary event.

Lady Lucy was chagrined, and her brother angry; but curioſity, and a ſtrong inclination to be amuſed at any rate, would not ſuffer a ſingle ſoul to attend to repellant miens and grave faces; and when Lord Morteyne ordered his ſervants to retire, they merely formed a more ſpacious ring round thoſe who were not to be commanded to a diſtance.

Maclean delivered the letter in great form; and whilſt the Laird was reading it, his male gueſts had diſincumbered the poney of its load, and finding a key ſealed and tied to a cord, they diſengaged it in a moment, and opening the caſe, diſplayed to the eager eyes of the ladies a moſt coſtly and ſuperb harp, a little the worſe however, for the tour it had made.

Lady

Lady Morteyne now looked grave, and changed color: ſhe well remembered to have ſeen the inſtrument at the houſe of her Lord, one morning that ſhe called unexpectedly upon Lady Lucy, and ſhe had ſuppoſed that it was deſigned for her; but when days and weeks paſſed by, and the transfer had not been made, to her at leaſt, ſhe felt diſappointed, and rather alarmed that ſo magnificent a preſent ſhould have been made to any lady but herſelf, for ſhe knew it was no longer in the poſſeſſion of Lady Lucy. But the preparations for her nuptials, which immediately followed, and the certainty of her noble lover's fidelity, ſoon baniſhed the circumſtance from her mind, where it would probably never have been revived, but for this heroic fancy of Mrs. Ellinger.

Lady Lucy perceived the emotion of her fair ſiſter, and in her extreme earneſtneſs to explain without appearing to explain, became ſo confuſed, that ſhe added to the latent ſuſpicion ſhe meant to repreſs.

Delamere, who was preſent, was wholly at a loſs to comprehend the reaſon of the double embarraſſment he obſerved, and Lord Morteyne, entirely diſconcerted by the accuſations and obliging compaſſion of his correſpondent, ſuddenly retired; whilſt Mr. Leſley employed his whole attention in endeavoring to diſperſe the aſſembly, becauſe he wiſhed to hold a parley with Menie or Maclean without ſo many auditors. He reminded Captain Povey that poor Eſtcourt was alone, and turning ſuddenly to ſome others of the party, he enquired, with an affectation of earneſtneſs, if the game had been decided, and if he had loſt or won his bet. His addreſs ſucceeded; for Povey thought he was compelled to take the hint; and the reſt of the men, who had quitted the billiard-table, having ſatisfied their curioſity, returned thither in the hope of ſatisfying their avarice.

Lady Morteyne likewiſe retired, followed by her ſiſter and her female viſiters, ſome of whom

whom had obſerved, with keen eyes, all that had paſſed, and hoped to extract a little gratification from the implied jealouſy of the woman whoſe good fortune they envied.

CHAP. IX.

A moon-light walk productive of alarm in vulgar minds — a meeting.

WHILST this ſcene paſſed at Guairdy, Roſella, happily unconſcious of it, was endeavoring to recruit her health and ſpirits, which had both been much diſcompoſed from anxiety and vexation: ſhe felt the promiſe Miſs Beauclerc had made, very efficacious in ſoothing the agitation ſhe had experienced, and eagerly anticipated the moment when ſhe might attempt her own vindica-

tion in the opinion of her ancient friend, Mr. Mordaunt, and ſolicit the continuance of his friendſhip, which at a time ſo critical, might form the future color of her life.

She found herſelf unable to ſit at the dinner-table, and therefore remained in her chamber the whole day, where Nancy ſeized the opportunity of Miſs Beauclerc's abſence, to inform her that Menie had heard at Guairdy, that the Laird's brother had broke his arm and almoſt killed himſelf, and that another gentleman had given her half-a-guinea only to tell him how her young lady was—a largeſſe ſo provoking to Nancy's envy, that ſhe entreated very earneſtly of Miſs Montreſor if ſhe choſe for to ſend back a civil word or two to the gentleman, ſhe would make her the meſſenger.

At another moment Roſella might have laughed at her ſimplicity, but at preſent it excited her impatience and anger ſo much, that ſhe diſmiſſed Nancy in tears, which flowed

ſlowed however, as much for her diſappointment, as for the fault for which ſhe was reprehended. Her diſgrace prevented the diſcloſure of the harp ſtory, and had therefore the good effect of preſerving Roſella from an increaſe of mortification and diſtreſs, which the knowledge of Mr. Eſtcourt's accident, and the donation of the half-guinea to Menie, had revived.

The following day her head-ach and the ſlight fever that had accompanied it, left her, and ſhe ſat with Miſs Beauclerc, who was pleaſed to ſee her recovered, but gave no indication of an immediate removal to Dunkeld, as a preliminary ſtep to an Engliſh journey; and Roſella was chagrined to obſerve that no movement or preparation was made for their departure from the cottage.

In the evening Miſs Beauclerc propoſed that ſhe ſhould walk with her in the grove near the houſe; but the invitation was declined, as Roſella feared to meet either the

Guairdy family, or any of their gueſts, in the company of her whimſical friend, as ſhe thought it too probable a ridiculous ſcene might enſue, to the abſurdity of which ſhe would become the principal victim.

Miſs Beauclerc, whoſe ideas were at that moment too enlarged and noble to ebulliate without inconvenience under any roof but the high-arched one of heaven, was therefore obliged to march forth by herſelf, fully reſolved to ſee what wonders patience, midnight, fortune, and a pale moon, would work for her. She was determined to pace the lawn before the houſe of Lord Morteyne—a ceremony which ought to have been excluſively performed by Roſella; but as her flighty friend deſpaired of inducing her to undertake it, ſhe thought the next beſt thing was to perform it by proxy.

In the interim Roſella, who little imagined the employment her timidity had compelled Miſs Beauclerc to engage in, waited

waited her return, after the clock had ſtruck ten, in great anxiety; and in another hour her conſternation increaſed ſo much, that ſhe ſent Menie to bring Maclean to her. He had retired to a cottage where he ſlept for want of room in that of his Lady, and had long been in bed when Menie, with Nancy in her ſuite, who was too much frightened to be left alone, endeavored to rouſe him from his gentle ſlumbers by the rural ſalutation of gravel at his window: but he was dreaming of having found three or four new genus of plants, and of becoming a greater and more celebrated perſonage than Linnæus himſelf; and Menie had much difficulty, as no doubt many others have, in awakening a man from a very pleaſant deluſion.

Roſella, reſtleſs from the impreſſion of her fears, and wiſhing to do ſomething without exactly knowing what, ran to call Nancy, that they might proceed to the grove together and ſearch round the houſe,

from a dread that Miſs Beauclerc might have fallen into a fit, and be lying without ſuccour: but ſhe diſcovered that Nancy had vaniſhed, after having in vain viſited every part of the houſe to find her; and the horror that ſeized her mind increaſed, on aſcertaining that at ſuch an hour ſhe was alone in the houſe, which had not one door or window ſhut throughout it.

At this moment ſhe heard the trampling of horſes very near, and ran to the portico, on which ſide the ſound came, to deſcry the intention of the riders: there ſhe could plainly diſtinguiſh the voices of men in converſation, who neither paſſed on, nor gave any ſignal that they wiſhed to be diſcerned by the inhabitants of a dwelling they ſeemed to ſurvēy with an intention the terrors of Roſella could well divine.

With trembling haſte ſhe faſtened the outward door, and cloſed the windows, and then flew to the thatched entrance to endeavor

deavor to ſecure that likewiſe; but as ſhe crept, ſcarcely breathing, towards a gate that terminated it, and which alone could render it ſecure from intruders, ſhe found that it had already been invaded, from the ſound of a ſtep almoſt as cautious as her own, which appeared to meet her; at the ſame moment a voice exclaimed, in an under tone—

"Menie, is it you?"

Roſella was now relieved of a part of her terrors; ſhe ſtill trembled however, though ſhe ſuppoſed the man, whoever he might be, was merely a lover of the damſel he had miſtaken her for: but as he continued to advance, ſhe ſuddenly retreated into the muſic-room, where the lights were burning on the ſupper-table.

For a moment all was quiet; yet Roſella, ſtill under the influence of her panic, ſtood gazing at the door through which ſhe had

entered, and at length fancying ſhe heard a whiſpering in the paſſage, ſuſpected that Menie was not unconcerned in the protracted abſence of Miſs Beauclerc, and that the purpoſe of the intruder was not love, but rapine: but amidſt many wild conjectures, ſhe was far from gueſſing that the man ſhe had fled from was then intently ſurveying her through the crevice of the unſhut door; and as her eyes were fixed with an expreſſion of diſmay upon it, he very naturally concluded he was ſeen, and entering the room, diſplayed the figure and features of Mr. Leſley.

Roſella ſtarted at an object ſo unlooked-for, and retreated as he advanced, with a dread ſo marked, that he thought it neceſſary to aſſure her ſhe had nothing to fear, before he attempted to excuſe his appearance at ſo late an hour, in a houſe he had no title to enter even at a leſs improper time.

He

He informed her that, having heard on the preceding day from one of her domeſtics that ſhe was indiſpoſed, he had taken the liberty of ſending to the ſame perſon in the morning, in the hope of learning that ſhe was recovered; for though he much wiſhed to convey his apologies to her for the impertinence of his conduct, he did not intend to give her the trouble of attending to them until ſhe was reſtored to her accuſtomed health; that he had intimated to the young woman, that he ſhould paſs the houſe in the evening, and would entreat her to tranſmit a letter from him to her young Lady, but having been detained at Dunkeld to the preſent hour, he had ſuppoſed it too late to execute his intention, until the lights he had ſeen in the lower apartments had induced him to venture with his billet, which he was far from being certain that the girl would have undertaken to deliver, and that he wiſhed to ſpeak to her himſelf, rather than entruſt the commiſ-

ſion to a ſervant, becauſe the ſucceſs of it was of importance to his happineſs.

Roſella, who well recollected the ſtory of the half-guinea reward, did not believe this exculpation, lame as it was, eſpecially when ſhe compared it with the manner in which the queſtion had been aſked of—"Menie, is it you?" and ſhe thought it was much more probable that Menie had conſented without ſcruple to the requeſt of a loan of her good offices; ſhe did not chuſe however to appear to doubt any part of the aſſertion, but very heartily wiſhing her viſiter away, ſtammered ſomething, ſhe ſcarcely knew what, expreſſive of her expectation that he would leave the houſe.

"I will go immediately," returned he; "but may I hope you will do me the honor to admit me to half an hour's converſation to-morrow? If it ſhould be inconvenient to ſee me here, perhaps you would prefer a walk in the Park—"

"No,

"No, Sir," interrupted Roſella indignantly: then ſuddenly reflecting that ſhe was ſtill unprotected by the vicinity of a ſingle being, her terrors returned, and Mr. Leſley perceiving that ſhe was offended, was beginning a ſecond apology, when a noiſe at the door of the portico interrupted it, and he haſtily left the houſe, after having conjured her to ſuffer him to ſpeak to her in the Park the next morning.

He had not been gone two minutes before Nancy ruſhed into the room, with a very pale aſpect, vowing ſhe had met a robber with a piſtol and a blunderbuſs, and ſhe ſuppoſed he had killed her miſtreſs, and ſtripped the houſe—

"Oh Lord, Miſs!" continued ſhe, "do let me ſtay till Menie and Maclean come in, if it's on my bare knees do let me ſtay here, for I'm ſure there's more ne he that rooned away, and I ſhall be murdered all

alone by myſelf, and ſo will you, if I go away from you!"

Roſella very readily conſented, though not juſt then from the fear of being murdered; and immediately enquired if ſhe had found Miſs Beauclerc, or called up Maclean.

Maclean was coming, ſhe ſaid, and he would find her Lady, for he knew every creek and corner round the place; but for her part, ſhe never could abide going out after dark.

The anxiety of Roſella now redoubled; it was now near twelve o'clock, and ſhe even regretted that ſhe had not endeavored to intereſt Mr. Leſley in the ſearch ſhe meant to begin, both in perſon and by her emiſſaries, as ſoon as they arrived.

It was almoſt ten minutes from the entrance of Nancy, before Menie appeared, yet

yet this delay was not for lack of ſpeed, as ſhe had quite loſt her breath with running; but Roſella diſcovered that after her companion and herſelf had ſucceeded in making Maclean underſtand the purport of the embaſſy, they had returned together, but had been frightened by the ſhadow of a buſh they had encountered in their way, and Nancy ſpringing by it with the elaſticity of terror, called to Menie to follow her example, which ſhe ſo far overcame her prejudices as to do, but in the effort, feeling one of the twigs of the fatal buſh ſtrike againſt her petticoat, ſhe thought the evil ſpirit had ſeized her, ſo ſhe fell down from fear, and lay ſome time with her eyes cloſed, till Nancy's ſtep could no longer be heard, and then, rather than be left all alone with the ſpectre, ſhe ſtarted up in deſperation, and followed with all her might.

The party was ſoon rendered complete by the arrival of Maclean; and Roſella had regulated the movements of the campaign

paign ſhe was going to undertake ; Maclean ſingly compoſing one column of her army, and the two damſels and herſelf the other, when the return of Miſs Beauclerc prevented the execution of their deſign, and lulled their fears to repoſe.

The good lady had, according to her intention, walked the lawn before the houſe at Guairdy, without perceiving a light in any window, or a ſingle being either in the dwelling, or about the dwelling: a circumſtance ſo extraordinary, that ſhe almoſt thought it the effect of ſupernatural agency miſleading her ſenſes, for, like other heroines, Miſs Beauclerc extremely condemned in theory the folly of believing in the ſpiritual viſitations of unembodied gentlefolks, but moſt devoutly ſubſcribed to the doctrine in private.

Having at length wearied herſelf almoſt paſt endurance with perambulating to and fro, without any indication of an approaching

ing adventure, ſhe thought it would be proper, *ſelon l'uſage*, to explore the burial-place belonging to the manſion, where ſhe had little doubt of being able to penetrate into the moſt ancient vaults of the deceaſed Nobles, and making ſome notable diſcovery worthy of record; but in this ſhe was equally diſappointed—the catacombs at Guairdy were very unhandſomely, kept invariably under bolt, padlock, lock and key, beſides very heavy mural entrenchments; and the perſon who was entruſted with the care of the place of worſhip which contained them, being neither ſubject to madneſs nor extreme intoxication, it was impoſſible to *wander* at midnight in the awful ſpace appropriated to the deceaſed family of Eſtcourt, and examine with ſublime horror their mouldering ſkeletons.

Miſs Beauclerc, provoked at the unneceſſary formality with which theſe matters were arranged, when ſhe wiſhed, and had ſuch good authority for expecting it would be otherwiſe,

otherwiſe, returned home before the "witching time," and thus prevented the ſearch her houſehold were ſo anxiouſly and dutifully ſetting on foot for her.

Maclean was diſmiſſed, the doors and windows of the houſe ſecured by the direction of Roſella, and the ladies then ſat down to a light ſupper, which Miſs Beauclerc was not averſe to, becauſe at that moment ſhe had not any very ſublime occupation for her mind.

The next morning was fated to produce a diſcovery not very agreeable to her, however gratifying it might be to her young companion. They learned that the whole bridal party had abruptly left Guairdy, with the exception of Mr. Eſtcourt, who could not yet be removed, and a friend who conſented to remain in the deſerted manſion, to amuſe the invalid.

This

This kind friend Roſella had reaſon to believe was Mr. Leſley; and ſhe augured nothing good, to herſelf at leaſt, from this ſuppoſed proof of humanity, which vanity and apprehenſion whiſpered ſhe might have a conſiderable ſhare in.

Again Miſs Beauclerc invited her to walk in the grove, or the park; but Roſella, recollecting the impertinent requeſt of the young man on the preceding evening, ſteadily declined it in ſpite of entreaty or perſuaſion: an obſtinacy that rather offended her friend, who might perhaps have inſiſted upon her compliance, had ſhe not ſuppoſed it improbable that ſhe could encounter any adventure, Mr. Eſtcourt being confined to the houſe, and his companion ſhe ſuppoſed to be either a dependant chaplain, or a led Captain, who would not preſume to ſtir from his elbow.

Roſella, in her abſence, lectured Menie very gravely upon her facility in liſtening to

to the requeſts of the ſtrange gentleman; and Menie proteſting that ſhe meant nae hairm, vowed, with a ſhower of tears, that ſhe wad na mair hearken to ony thing he ſaud—a reſolution Roſella much commended: and ſhe was extremely ſurpriſed after having heard it, to ſee the girl preſenting her a letter, after ſhe had retired for the night, which the gentleman had made her tak, ſhe ſaid, though ſhe tauld him hoo angered her young leddy had been; but the gentleman tauld her he wad na do ony thing to anger the young leddy, aunly he tauld her to try gin the young leddy wad tak the lettre, and gin ſhe wad na, there wad be na hairm, and ſhe maun gie it him back.

"Well then," ſaid Roſella, much vexed, "give it him again; and be aſſured, Menie, if you ſpeak to me any more of this gentleman, or any other, I will complain of you to your miſtreſs."

Menie

Menie ſneaked away with the unfortunate letter in her hand, much alarmed at this threat, and mad wi the cunning loon, that had tauld her there was nae hairm, and almoſt loſt her her place.

Roſella, mortified by a purſuit that was far from reflecting honor upon her, counted every moment that paſſed over her head in a ſituation ſo expoſed; yet ſhe forbore to preſs Miſs Beauclerc to haſten her removal, ſince ſhe had learned that of Lord Morteyne, leſt it might be ſuppoſed that they followed him; and ſhe thought it would be more prudent to remain in the cottage a few days at leaſt, to take from their journey the air of a purſuit.

But the next morning her opinion again varied, when her whimſical friend ſent to haſten her appearance at breakfaſt, with intelligence that a gentleman awaited her coming with impatience. Hope once more reviſited the boſom of Roſella, with the idea

idea of the preſence of Mr. Mordaunt, and ſhe queſtioned Menie, who had been ſent to her, as to the age and appearance of their gueſt; but ſhe had not ſeen him, and Roſella hurrying down ſtairs, beheld, inſtead of her old friend, Mr. Oberne, who appeared ſo well pleaſed with the reception Miſs Beauclerc had given him, that he flew to greet her with all the animation the unchecked energy of his character produced: but Roſella received his ſalutation coldly, and the vivacity of Oberne vaniſhed; he endeavored however to rally his ſpirits, and gratified the vanity of Miſs Beauclerc by expreſſing much admiration of her retreat.

Roſella having recovered from her firſt ſurpriſe, began to revolve the means by which he had diſcovered it, and did not entirely exculpate her inconſequent friend from having herſelf given him the information: but this ſuſpicion was diſcarded, from the converſation that followed.

'This

"This then is the paradiſe," continued Oberne, "from which ſuch poor devils as myſelf were to be excluded. You, Madam," addreſſing the lady of the manſion, "have ſo much complaiſance as merely to exhibit aſtoniſhment when I ſhow my recreant face; but Miſs Montreſor, who, to do her juſtice, never flattered me much, diſplays a far greater portion of conſternation than welcome."

"Perhaps," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc, "ſhe has reaſon to be diſmayed, if ſhe is to conclude that your ſociety will in future be as injurious to her in its conſequences as it has been hitherto."

Roſella ſhocked at this opening, and fearing that theſe reports and ſuſpicions, which ſhe could not think of without the utmoſt confuſion, would be diſcuſſed in her preſence to the individual perſon who had given riſe to them, was haſtily quitting the room; but Oberne caught her hand, and entreated that ſhe would liſten to him.

"I am

"I am to conclude, I fear," cried he, "that what I have now heard is meant as a reproach: and how I am to endeavor to merit forgiveneſs I know not, ſince the cenſure paſſed upon me is not the reſult of my own miſconduct, but of the deteſtable impertinence and injuſtice of others, over whom I have neither influence nor controul. But of this Miſs Montreſor may be aſſured, that though I could not prevent the inſolence by which ſhe ſuffers, I will at leaſt avenge her."

The confuſion and diſtreſs of Roſella now gave place to apprehenſion.

"For heaven's ſake, Mr. Oberne," exclaimed ſhe, "do not increaſe the miſery I have ſuffered, by a raſh reſentment!—You may pacify your own indignation by pretending to puniſh my defamers, but you can only do me injury by appearing as my champion!"

"You

"You know then," cried Oberne—but immediately checking himſelf, he addreſſed Miſs Beauclerc. "Has Leſley," demanded he, "preſumed to mention my name to you in a manner to ſhock your delicacy?"

"Who is Leſley?" returned ſhe: "no perſon has entered this houſe but Lord Morteyne."

Oberne, turning haſtily to Roſella, ſaw her cheeks, which a moment before were unuſually pale, fluſh a deep crimſon—

"I ſee how it is," exclaimed he, "but he ſhall repent his treacherous villany!"

His eyes ſparkled with rage; and Roſella remembering his impetuoſity at Dumbarton, now trembled at the idea of the miſchiefs that might enſue.

"You terrify me," ſaid ſhe, burſting into tears. "Mr. Oberne, if you are really concerned for the odium you have

undeſignedly attached to my name, you will not add to my diſtreſs by making me a further ſubject for the cenſures of the world."

"Roſella," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc, "I grieve to obſerve that the momentary impertinence of a few envious women and idle men, ſhould make ſuch an impreſſion upon your mind: diſcard your fears, and think only with contempt of the hurtleſs ſlanders you ought never to have regarded!"

The lady as ſhe ſpoke, happening to caſt her eye upon the breakfaſt equipage, recollected that neither Roſella nor herſelf had taken any thing; and adviſing her with yet more energy to riſe above the faſtidious criticiſms of thoſe deſpicable beings who called themſelves the great world, ſhe invited Oberne to a ſeat on her right hand, and obliging Roſella to occupy another on her left, ſhe drank her tea with infinite compoſure, and declaimed upon the advantages

tages of a fondneſs for ſolitude and retirement.

"For example," added ſhe, "my dear Roſella, ſpite of the malice of her perſecutors, could ſurely be contented with ſuch a cottage as this, and the ſociety of thoſe ſhe loves!"

"No, Madam," replied Roſella, "not whilſt I imagined one ſingle being in the multitude I quitted, could affix to my conduct the ſlighteſt ſtain!"

"I adore your delicacy," cried Oberne eagerly, "and I think it is impoſſible that injuſtice can be extended ſo far as to deprive you for any time of that tribute of eſteem and veneration ſo much your due!"

"Pray," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc, after a momentary reverie, "who is this Leſley of whom you ſpoke a few minutes back?"

"He is," replied Oberne, "the brother of Lady Morteyne: you may perhaps remember to have ſeen him in Edinburgh: I mean," added he haſtily, "that we paſſed

him in the Canon-gate, on the morning you permitted me the honor of being your Cicerone."

Miſs Beauclerc aſſented; and Roſella now too well recollected that ſhe had likewiſe ſeen him, though not in the ſame place: for, in fact, Mr. Leſley was the young man who had been ſo unwilling to quit her at the door of the tavern, to which the Edinburgh coachman had unfortunately driven Miſs Beauclerc and herſelf after their excurſion to the theatre. She was ſurpriſed that the circumſtance had never before occurred to her, as ſhe had retained a confuſed remembrance both of his voice and features, and ſhe no longer felt aſtoniſhed that he had purſued her as he had done, or that he had thrown out thoſe mortifying hints relating to Oberne: but that he ſhould have the power to relate her Edinburgh adventure to Lord Morteyne's family, and his numerous gueſts, ſtruck her to the heart; a ſickening anguiſh aſſailed her, and her counte-

countenance gave indication of what paſſed within.

Oberne ſaw the conflict, and endeavored to diſſipate the pain he had unwarily occaſioned, by every attention he could deviſe; but as it was eaſy to diſcover that his preſence was unpleaſing to her, he at length withdrew, in a temper of mind very well adapted to execute an intention he had ſecretly formed, of extirpating the unfortunate Leſley from the face of the earth. And whilſt he was marching with haſty ſtrides to Guairdy, Roſella employed the alternate perſuaſives of tears, repreſentation, and entreaty, to induce Miſs Beauclerc to haſten her departure from the cottage.

The good lady might have ſlighted the repreſentation, and rejected the entreaty; but the tears of Roſella, reinforced by the certainty of retaining Oberne as a dernier reſort for any future atchievement where an adorer muſt figure in the ſcene, deter-

mined her compliance, and orders were given to Nancy to pack up with all poſſible diſpatch, as her Lady reſolved their removal ſhould take place the next morning.

Nancy had but two hours back acquired an admirer, who appeared to have dropped from the clouds on purpoſe to conſole her for the ſudden departure of all the fine liveried and unliveried gentlemen ſhe had heard Menie ſpeak of as the ſatellites of the brilliant conſtellations at Guairdy; and looking aghaſt at this command, ſhe ſtood motionleſs with grief and diſappointment.

"As for Maclean, and that awkward creature I found here," continued Miſs Beauclerc, "let them remain in the houſe; and I will give my agent at Dunkeld inſtructions concerning them."

"Yes, Madam," ſaid Nancy, courteſying, "and if you would pleaſe to think that I could do any good here, I ſhould like vaſtly to ſtay too!"

"You!

"You! no certainly not!" exclaimed her miſtreſs; "I ſhall take you with me to London."

"To London!—Oh crimini!" whiſpered Nancy, "there are plenty of ſweethearts to be had there, ſo I need not grudge to leave one behind."

With a mien entirely altered, ſhe promiſed, unaſked, to pack all night rather than not be ready; and Roſella, who was yet more deſirous than herſelf that her taſk ſhould be accompliſhed, volunteered her aſſiſtance, after having required directions of Miſs Beauclerc concerning the baggage to be taken with them.

CHAP. X.

A parting—a rich relation non compos—and a careful heir.

ROSELLA had employed herſelf very diligently about two hours, and Nancy being then obliged to leave her poſt to attend to the menage, her ideas became more diſengaged, and ſhe recollected that it would not probably occur to Miſs Beauclerc to ſend to Dunkeld for a carriage. The apprehenſion of having their journey delayed even a day by ſuch a want of thought, made her haſtily quit her ſelf-impoſed taſk, and run down ſtairs to remind her of it.

Miſs

Miſs Beauclerc was not however in either room; for being too ſublimely idle to aſſiſt in a buſtle, ſhe had taken her uſual walk. But as Roſella entered one door of the muſic-room, Oberne appeared at the other, and ſhe could not avoid the *tête-à-tête* chance had conducted her to.

"Dear Miſs Montreſor, deareſt Roſella," cried he, "how little did I divine the diſtreſs you are ſo cruelly compelled to encounter! I had no idea that the eccentricities I have remarked in Miſs Beauclerc were accompanied by occaſional derangement, or I would not have quitted you at Luſs, but for the purpoſe of giving your friends information of your unpleaſant ſituation. Need I tell you how ſincerely I participate in any uneaſineſs you endure? Will you not believe that whatever happineſs I may have had during the time I ſpent near you, I repent the blindneſs which made me ſlight your more prudent repulſe, and overlook the inability of your

poor friend to decide how far it was proper to indulge my wiſh of remaining in your ſociety? Tell me only what I can do to ſerve you, to whom I may apply amongſt your relations or connexions, to ſnatch you from a ſituation which I fear injures your health."

Roſella was ſilent: ſhe had indeed ſuſpected, and was almoſt aſſured of the unhappy circumſtance Oberne thus decidedly mentioned; but to have it confirmed ſo ſuddenly—to find that Miſs Beauclerc's unfortunate ſtate of mind had been ſo far diſcuſſed at the houſe of Lord Morteyne, where ſhe ſuppoſed Oberne had learned the intelligence, as to make it no longer a matter to be doubted, moſt ſenſibly ſhocked her.

"Good God!" exclaimed he, "I ſeem to approach you only to inflict pain!—I have been too precipitate—you will hate the ſight of me, and abhor the ſound of my name! But ſurely you muſt have obſerved

ſerved the misfortune I ſpeak of? I have not been the firſt to announce it to you?"

"No," replied ſhe; "I have already thought it but too poſſible: yet I will only thank you for your offers of ſervice, without troubling you to fulfil them, as Miſs Beauclerc has herſelf determined to return to her home; and then," added Roſella, with a ſigh, "I ſhall be conveyed to mine!"

"But you cannot travel to England without any other protection!" ſaid Oberne: "if her dreadful malady ſhould increaſe whilſt you are upon the road, I ſhould tremble for you; the ſhock of ſuch an event would overwhelm you!"

"I muſt take my chance," returned Roſella, "for I have no friend in this country to whom I could apply upon any emergency, however preſſing; and the beſt thing I can do, is to quit it as faſt as poſſible. But I muſt ſtill hope that this event is only temporary; I truſt it will go off when Miſs Beauclerc is ſettled in her

reſidence, and no longer haraſſes herſelf by moving from place to place: if I had reaſon to imagine otherwiſe, I ſhould be ſtill more unhappy than I am at preſent."

"I will hope ſo too," ſaid Oberne; "but I muſt return to the ſubject of my anxiety—I muſt repeat that you cannot travel alone with Miſs Beauclerc."

"Nancy goes with us!" interrupted ſhe.

"My dear Miſs Montreſor, of what ſervice would Nancy be to you or her miſtreſs, were any diſtreſſing event to take place, of which there is, at leaſt, a probability?"

"I have already told you," replied Roſella, "that it cannot be otherwiſe; and there is cruelty in placing dangers before my eyes which I have no power to avoid."

Oberne made no anſwer to this obſervation; but, muſing a moment, ſuddenly aſked her when they began their journey.

"To-

"To-morrow morning," returned ſhe.

"So ſoon!—But I thank you for the information."

"You do not mean, I hope," ſaid Roſella, "to accompany us? Conſider, Mr. Oberne ——"

"I do conſider," interrupted he; "I give far greater conſideration to your welfare and intereſt, than I could ever prevail upon myſelf to beſtow upon my own. I will follow you at a diſtance, but without giving up the power of aſſiſting you, ſhould you unfortunately require any aid: for I cannot ſuffer your delicacy to plunge you into difficulties I ſhudder to think of; nor could I endure the miſerable anxiety I ſhould otherwiſe be a prey to, leſt you ſhould ſink under the diſtreſs I could ſo well imagine."

"I have no power to prevent you from acting as you pleaſe," returned ſhe, "unleſs you will liſten to my entreaties not to endeavor to alter my deſtiny, whatever it may be: but pardon me, Sir, if I ſay the trouble

trouble you mean to give yourſelf, though it certainly requires my acknowledgments, cannot, as I am ſituated, contribute to my intereſt or my welfare; and as to inconvenience or embarraſſment, I regard them much leſs than the odium I might incur."

"You are reſolved," interrupted Oberne, "that my cares ſhall be diſintereſted; by forcing me to perceive that they are entirely unacceptable, you are not reduced to the neceſſity of regarding me more favorably on account of my Quixotiſm."

"My mind is too much diſturbed," ſaid Roſella, "to allow me to excuſe my obſtinacy, as perhaps I might be able to do: but I cannot adopt another opinion, even though you ſhould think me ungrateful—a charge I ſhould of all others moſt abhor. Will you," ſhe added, "inform me who gave you ſo confirmed an idea of the melancholy circumſtance that introduced this ſubject?"

"I heard it from every body at Guairdy, with the accompaniment of ſuch facts, that I could

I could no longer doubt, as I wiſhed to do."

"And was it from Guairdy too," ſhe aſked, "that you learned Miſs Beauclerc's preſent reſidence?"

"It was," replied Oberne: "why do you enquire?"

Roſella bluſhed whilſt ſhe anſwered in a heſitating accent, that it was of no conſequence.

"I underſtand you," ſaid he; "and I hope you will believe that I have endeavored to efface any idea that contributed to draw upon you the impertinence I cannot think of with patience."

The entrance of Miſs Beauclerc now relieved Roſella from the confuſion ſhe ſuffered from a diſcuſſion ſo unpleaſant; and both Oberne and herſelf examined the countenance of the lady as ſhe accoſted them, with an attention they had never before thought of employing;

employing; but they could not obſerve any ſigns of diſcompoſure either in her features or manner: indeed ſhe was ſo well pleaſed to ſee the aſſiduities of Oberne, and found them ſo conſoling after the failure of the grand ſcheme ſhe had been at ſuch an immenſe expence to accompliſh, that his preſence gave her an air of placidity that could not be miſtaken.

Roſella, regarding the preſent moment as a lucid interval, was eager to advance their journey before the proſpect ſhould be again overclouded, and mentioned the neceſſity of ſending to Dunkeld for a poſt-chaiſe. As ſhe ſuſpected, the imagination of her luckleſs friend had been too much occupied to allow of ſuch a recollection; but Maclean was now diſpatched upon the errand.

Miſs Beauclerc invited Oberne to dinner; but he declined the intended honor, by ſaying he was engaged to return to Guairdy: an

an arrangement that better met the approbation of Roſella, who now retired to purſue the taſk ſhe had impoſed upon herſelf.

As ſhe was emptying a drawer appropriated to herſelf, ſhe took up the unread memoirs of her flighty friend, which ſhe had depoſited there: ſhe felt a momentary curioſity to examine them; but fearing to encounter painful proofs of the derangement ſhe deplored, they were placed with ſome things ſhe valued, in a ſmall caſe which had been aſſigned to her uſe. She was ſurpriſed Miſs Beauclerc had never enquired if ſhe had looked over them; but imagined, what was really the fact, that her poor friend had been ſo engroſſed by the hurry of ſucceeding events, that ſhe ſcarcely remembered the confidence ſhe had repoſed in her. In the ſame drawer a memento of her own forgetfulneſs met her eye, in an envelope addreſſed to Mr. Delamere, at Newcaſtle, whither ſhe had firſt thought of ſending the note; but on recollecting that there

there was a greater probability of his finding it at the Lodge, ſhe altered her purpoſe, and uſing the firſt cover as waſte paper, it now aſſailed her, and brought on the unpleaſant remembrance that the value of the note was ſtill due to Mr. Delamere, as he affirmed he had never received his own, and that ſhe had ſuffered him to leave Guairdy without adjuſting the affair.

She was ſenſible that Miſs Beauclerc would not heſitate to relieve her embarraſſment, by immediately advancing the money; but ſhe felt an invincible ſcruple in applying to her for ſuch a ſum, now that ſhe ſuſpected ſhe knew not the value of the property ſhe ſquandered with ſo profuſe a hand. Mr. Ellinger, ſhe was convinced, would never liſten to ſuch a demand upon her own ſmall income, as he had always rigidly denied her, from that ſource, every ſuperfluous expence, and had given her very frequent reprimands when he witneſſed any lapſe of prudence in the appropriation

priation of the ſtipend he thought proper to allow her: but theſe circumſtances had never before made any very unpleaſant impreſſion upon her mind, becauſe every indulgence that an ample fortune and maternal fondneſs could ſhower upon a favored child, had been her's through the attachment of Miſs Beauclerc.

She reflected with anguiſh how changed her proſpects were ſince ſix ſhort months! She recollected what a gay, thoughtleſs, happy creature was then Roſella Montreſor, with a reaſonable hope before her of being introduced with credit, through the influence of her approved friend, into a world, which to her youthful imagination, then appeared all charming, gay, and deſirable.

What now were her views? To endeavor, by retiring within the limits of the ſphere to which her orphan ſtate had reduced her, to loſe the unfortunate celebrity

brity the eccentric conduct of Miſs Beauclerc had procured her; to try, by the aid of reaſon and prudence, to baniſh the remembrance of thoſe gay hopes ſhe had once cheriſhed; with a perception naturally diſtinguiſhing, and an acute idea of propriety, to live in the centre of affectation, moroſe tyranny, abſurd pretenſions, and ſquabbling ill-humour; and with a mind energetic and reflective, to endure perpetually the prattle of folly, and the ſcorn of the contemptible.

To this had the romantic fervor of Miſs Beauclerc reduced her, by an unſucceſsful endeavor to realize ſome of thoſe pictures her vitiated taſte would not allow her natural good ſenſe to analyſe.

Yet however Roſella might ſhrink from ſuch a perſpective, ſhe would not ſuffer her diſappointment to ebulliate in reflections injurious to her unhappy friend: her's was a diſappointment unmixed with gall, except

except indeed when the firſt emotion of keen mortification forced from her lips a half expreſſed complaint.

She could not reſt in the night for the impatience with which ſhe longed to behold the dawn of that day that was to carry her towards the only perſon, from whoſe friendly and ſenſible advice ſhe hoped aſſiſtance and comfort; and it appeared at length, without giving her any omen of the freſh diſtreſs it was to bring with it.

Oberne called at eight o'clock, and could not withſtand the permiſſion of Miſs Beauclerc to partake her breakfaſt; but he had a head-ach, and was otherwiſe unfit for converſation; and Roſella, who felt concerned at his uncommon depreſſion, tried in vain to relieve it by attentions ſuch as ſhe had never before diſplayed to him.

The chaiſe Maclean had ordered, appeared at the door at nine, and at the ſame moment

moment Mr. Leſley ſent, by Nancy, an entreaty to ſee Miſs Montreſor for five minutes: but ſhe was little diſpoſed to comply with this requeſt, and before Miſs Beauclerc could ſignify her aſſent or diſapprobation, ſhe returned an anſwer, importing that ſhe was much engaged, and deſired to be excuſed.

"Perhaps," ſaid Oberne, "he wiſhes to offer an apology, that may likewiſe exculpate me from any lurking ſuſpicion of having authoriſed or countenanced the liberties that have been taken with your name."

"If that is his errand," exclaimed Miſs Beauclerc, who panted for a ſcene of pathetic ſublimity, "my dear Roſella, you may as well ſee him."

"No, Madam," replied ſhe, with a face of earneſt entreaty, "I do not wiſh to hear any thing more of a circumſtance ſo diſtreſſing to me, and I muſt beg to withdraw from Mr. Leſley's apologies, or whatever he may intend to ſay."

Oberne

Oberne now left the room, and Roſella ſaw him advance to the gentleman in waiting, who was receiving the meſſage from Nancy; and after a ſhort converſation, Mr. Leſley walked away.

In another half hour every thing was arranged for their departure: Oberne aſſiſted Miſs Beauclerc into the chaiſe, and when Roſella preſented her hand as a parting compliment, he preſſed it to his lips with emotion.

"I ſhall ſee you I hope," ſaid he, "when your journey is ended; for I too, am bound for London, whither my affairs have called me for ſome time paſt, but called in vain whilſt you remained in Scotland!"

Roſella bluſhed, and trying to aſſume a diſengaged air, bade him farewel.

"Farewel, deareſt Miſs Montreſor!" returned he; "when I ſee you in England, do not

not treat me as a mere travelling acquaintance, with a cool bow and a mien of ſurpriſe, if I ſhould have the preſumption to claim the little corner I hope to retain in your memory."

This converſation paſſed at a ſmall diſtance from the chaiſe, by the ſide of which Nancy ſtood, with a ſmall eſcrutoire in one hand, and a dreſſing-box in the other, both of which were to travel upon her knees; and her Lady ſat, *en attendant*, very patiently, without an idea of hurrying affairs, as ſhe well knew that it was extremely natural for a lover to make the moſt of a parting moment.

"Miſs Beauclerc waits!" ſaid Roſella, endeavoring to advance.

"Once more then adieu!" returned Oberne; "and recollect, if any diſtreſs, foreſeen or unforeſeen, ſhould aſſail you, that I ſhall not be far behind throughout your journey:

journey: I underſtand that you return by the way of Carliſle?"

"I really do not know," interrupted ſhe, "what Miſs Beauclerc has decided upon: but we are detaining her."

He then ſuffered her to walk to the chaiſe, and placed her in it; then with his uſual good-humour, ſhook hands with Nancy, who made a low courteſy for the condeſcenſion, and turning to diſcover if Menie obſerved it, ſaw her blubbering at the door of the cottage: ſo ſhe gave her a nod of protection, and beſtowing another of equally marked ſuperiority upon Maclean, who was thinking more of his greenhouſe than of her, ſhe was at length ſo obliging, after theſe ceremonials were performed, to follow the ladies into the chaiſe, and away they trotted for Dunkeld.

Miſs Beauclerc could not thus leave her charming retreat, where ſhe expected to have encountered ſo different a ſet of ad-

ventures, without great mortification: and ſublime as were uſually her ideas, ſhe could not reflect either upon the trouble or expence it had coſt her unavailingly, without feeling diſconcerted. She no longer experienced ſo preſſing an inclination to communicate every hour's employment to the gentle Selina, who on her ſide, was almoſt annihilated at the diſcomfiture of a plan which ſhe had for a year back moſt exceedingly valued herſelf upon having wholly invented and arranged, and which was to have terminated, after a number of ſweet intereſting ſcenes and ſituations, in the marriage of Lord Morteyne and Roſella—a charming diſcovery, full of ſentiment, of the birth of the lovely bride, and a moſt elegant epiſode to portray the immutable friendſhip of Mrs. Ellinger, who intended to poſſeſs the enthuſiaſtic affection of all the parties after having done ſo much to deſerve it.

By

By the direction of Miſs Beauclerc, the driver took her to the houſe of Mr. Craufurd, who was yet to learn her ſudden departure for the South.

As the chaiſe drew up to the door, Roſella and herſelf had once again the honor of beholding Mrs. Tadpole, the virago houſekeeper at Guairdy: ſhe was at that moment taking her leave of Mrs. Craufurd, who wore her very beſt holiday countenance, and followed her gueſt, as uſual, into the ſtreet with ſmiles and courteſies.

"I aſſure you, Madam," ſaid Mrs. Tadpole, turning back with a ſudden motion, whilſt her voice, cleaving the air like a canon-ball, diſtinctly met the ears of Roſella and her friend, "I aſſure you, Ma'am, as my account, which I have made bold to trouble you with, isn't at all *exdaggered*, it's a thing I never do."

"No, Ma'am, no;" returned Mrs. Craufurd,

ſurd, courteſying anew; "very true, Ma'am, very true."

The houſekeeper returning theſe civilities with the moſt gracious air ſhe could contrive to throw over her countenance for the occaſion, and not thinking any more aſſurances requiſite, ſtumped off, and Mrs. Craufurd had then leiſure to beſtow a look of enquiry upon her new gueſts—a look that brought her information equally unexpected and unwelcome. She darted ſeveral glances of ſcorn into the chaiſe, and retreating into her houſe very ſuddenly, ſhut the ſtreet door with a vehemence that made them ſtart.

"The woman is ſurely poſſeſſed," exclaimed Miſs Beauclerc, "to treat us in this manner!"

Roſella could very well gueſs what her conduct implied, and extremely doubtful if they ſhould be able to procure admittance

to

to the maſter of the caſtellum, endeavored to perſuade her friend to retire to an hotel, and ſend for him there to ſettle her Caledonian affairs. But Miſs Beauclerc ſuſpecting part of the truth, from the remnant of converſation ſhe had overheard, was too much irritated to attend to counſels of ſuch moderation, and having directed the driver to let her out, ſhe rung Maiſter Craufurd's bell with a moſt ſovereign peal of authority.

The gude mon's office looked into the ſtreet, and he was drawn to one of the windows by the unuſual violence of the application; but inſtead of flying to the door with innumerable low bows and fawning ſalutations, he called apparently to ſome other perſon in the room with him, who came likewiſe to the window, and gazed earneſtly at Miſs Beauclerc, turning afterwards a ſcrutinizing regard upon Roſella.

The ſtranger was an elderly man, with a cold and forbidding aſpect; he wore a black wig, which covered half his forehead, and was tied in a very long queue behind; his whole appearance indicating little commerce with the world, much formality, and more ſelfiſhneſs.

Miſs Beauclerc, who had hitherto been diſguſted with the ſervility of her Scotch agent, was the more provoked at the remarkable change in his deportment, and the groſs inſolence of his wife; with the mien of a perſon highly indignant, ſhe turned from the impertinent obſervation of the ſable-peruked gentleman, and though ſhe now heard Mr. Craufurd buſtling up the paſſage to open the door, ſhe renewed the thundering ſummons to be let in.

"Hoo d'ye do, Madam?" ſaid the Scotchman, in a very conciliating tone; "this pleaſure is ſae unexpected that I cad na believe my ees when I ſaw ye at the door."

"I like-

"I likewiſe," replied Miſs Beauclerc, "have been doubting my eyes; and I ſhould imagine Mrs. Craufurd has no reaſon to value herſelf upon the excellence of her ſight, or ſurely after ſurveying me very attentively, ſhe would not have turned her back ſo rudely upon me!"

"Ah, ſhe has a cauld in her heed," replied Mr. Craufurd, "and there wull gather a miſt before her ees fra teme to teme, and then ſhe canna diſteenguiſh friends fra faes!"

The lady was rather mollified by this explanation, and having deſired Roſella to wait her return without quitting the chaiſe, ſhe followed her conductor, who bowed vara low, into his wife's drawing-room, where he left her for a few moments to give the good woman a lecture, and confer with the ſtranger, whom on his return he introduced to Miſs Beauclerc as his friend, but without mentioning any name.

In a quarter of an hour Mr. Craufurd appeared at the chaiſe-door, and brought a meſſage from Miſs Beauclerc, to the great relief of Roſella, directing her to proceed with Nancy and the baggage to the inn they had viſited on their firſt entrance into Dunkeld, and that ſhe would follow as ſoon as poſſible.

Roſella obeyed this intimation, ſo much delighted with eſcaping any further civil or uncivil ill-humour from Mrs. Craufurd, that ſhe did not reflect much upon the omiſſion of not inviting her into the houſe: having waited very patiently till three o'clock, without hearing any tidings of her friend, as both Nancy and herſelf had riſen early, they began to think their dinner would not be unwelcome; and Roſella ventured to ſend to Mr. Craufurd's, to learn if Miſs Beauclerc was coming. A reply was returned, that the lady was endeavoring to diſpoſe of her cottage, and would be engaged

ged in the diſcuſſion of the buſineſs till the evening.

Roſella therefore ordered her ſolitary meal, but had loſt much of her inclination to do honor to it, from the proſpect of having her journey thus perpetually delayed: ſhe was vexed too to find herſelf at a houſe of public entertainment, accompanied only by the ſimple Nancy; and to fly from unpleaſant reflections, opened one of the packages for a book, and read till ſeven. From this hour, every ſtep in the paſſage leading to the apartment where ſhe ſat, every ſound on the ſtairs, ſeemed to announce the return of her inconſiderate friend; but time after time her imagination deceived her, and at ten o'clock her uneaſineſs increaſed ſo much, that ſhe deſired Nancy to accompany her, and determined to walk to the houſe of Mr. Craufurd, to learn the reaſon of an abſence protracted ſo conſiderably beyond her expectation. But as ſhe was preparing for the purpoſe, ſhe ſaw

ſaw the Scotchman enter the room, attended by the ſingular looking perſonage ſhe had obſerved at his office window. A tremor ſeized her—

"Where is Miſs Beauclerc?" exclaimed ſhe.

"The gude leddy is parfectly ſafe," replied Mr. Craufurd, who prevented his companion from anſwering the enquiry; "and ſhe deſires that her luggage may be ſent to mie hooſe, that ſhe may examine it for ſome papers relating to the cottage, which is noo beckume the praperty of this gentleman."

A ſecret dread ſtole over the heart of Roſella at this ſtrange requeſt, her cheeks turned pale, and ſhe ſupported herſelf only with the aſſiſtance of Nancy, who thought the black-perriwigged man muſt either be a bailiff or a thief, and began to tremble for her own ſuperb wardrobe, which ſhe had been ſo long toiling to gather together.

After

After a pauſe, in which Roſella had found it impoſſible to break ſilence, ſhe at length ſaid with a trembling voice—

"I expected the return of Miſs Beauclerc long before this hour; will you inform me what detains her?"

"Some vara parteeklar buſineſs," replied Mr. Craufurd.

She pauſed again; at length—

"Miſs Beauclerc," reſumed ſhe, "has ſo often entreated me to take peculiar care, in her abſence, of two or three packages belonging to her, that I think ſhe cannot intend I ſhould ſend all her baggage;—but if I ſhould be miſtaken, ſhe will perhaps write me a note; and the diſtance is ſo ſmall between this place and Mr. Craufurd's houſe, that the delay cannot be of much conſequence."

"Look

"Look you, Madam," ſaid the ſtranger, throwing out his hand to enforce his elocution, "I ſhall cut this matter ſhort; you have ſeen enough of my poor couſin, God help her, to know that ſhe is as mad as a March hare, ſo you cannot wonder that I, who am her heir in reaſon, and her heir at law, ſhould begin to look about me, and ſee after my property, before the reſt of it is ſcattered round the kingdom at the rate it has been. I am not ſurpriſed that you ſhould be unwilling to give up your hold, and a fine milch-cow ſhe has been to you by all accounts. But this you muſt take with you, Miſs—all the fine things you have got of her, after her inſanity is notoriouſly proved, the law will obligate you to refund; and as to her property here, you had better give it up without more ado."

The latter part of this harangue was not heard by Roſella, who had loſt all ſenſation in the arms of Nancy, thrown round her as much

much in terror for herſelf as any other motive.

"Oh Lord, what hae you done with my poor miſtreſs?" cried the girl, in an agony; "and here too, as I hope for marcy in the day of judgment, you have killed poor Miſs Montreſor!"

This exclamation produced no effect either upon the man of law, or the heir at law, who began culling from the pile of baggage that was placed in a corner of the room, every trunk, band-box, dreſſing-box, and eſcrutoire, portable and unwieldy, that bore the name or initials of Miſs Beauclerc: and that they might not by miſtake leave any thing behind them to which the couſin could in any way pretend a claim, they carried off two packages without inſcription, one of which appertained excluſively to Roſella: then, perfectly ſatisfied with their uninterrupted ſucceſs, they diſappeared,

peared, leaving Nancy in a conſternation ſo great, that ſhe would not venture to ſcream out for aſſiſtance till ſhe thought them far away, leſt they ſhould return and murder her.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.